

GET HOLD OF THAT
LEUTENANT. FIND OUT THEIR
SITUATION EXACTLY.

YES
SIR.

SPECIAL FORCES 151 TO
STRANDED MARINE UNIT. I
NEED YOUR SITUATION AND
LOCATION

ARTY? GET
THE MEN READY
TO FIGHT

SIR!

CAPTAIN? THE MARINES ARE
CURRENTLY ENGAGED. OUR
ETA IS TWENTY MINUTES



YOU DON'T HAVE TO GO ON
THIS MISSION.



IT IS NOT
YOUR DUTY.





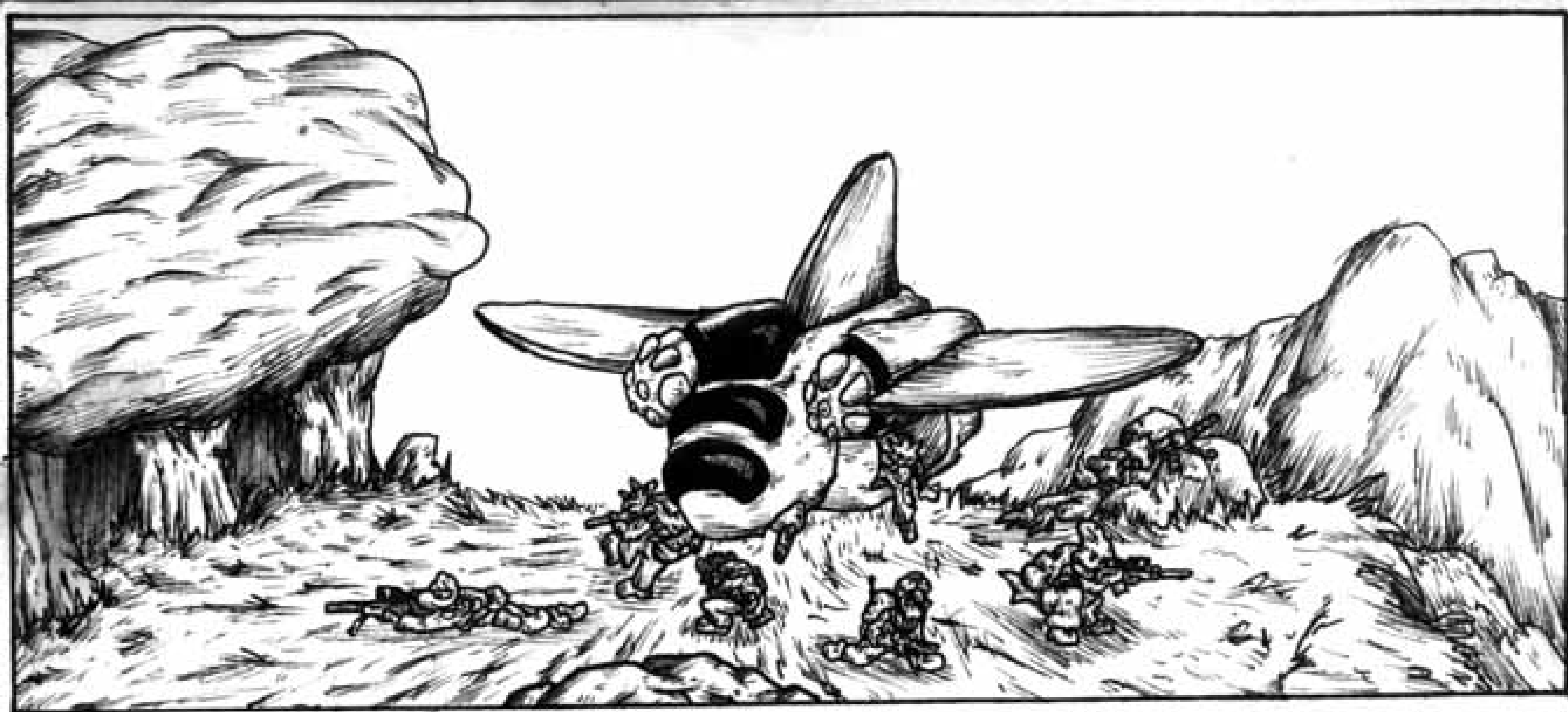
TED, I'VE GOT THE SAME
DEBT AS YOU DO, I HAVE TO
GO.

I SEE WHAT YOU'RE DOING,
SIR, YOU'RE TRYING TO
LEAVE US HERE SO YOU CAN
KILL ALL THOSE BASTARDS
WITHOUT US. WELL, YOU CAN
FORGET IT. I'M IN.

I WOULD BE IN YOUR
DEBT IF I COULD JOIN YOU
ON THIS NOBLE MISSION, SIR.

NEARLY AT THE DROP
ZONE, SIR.

ALL RIGHT, EVERYONE
OUT WHO'S GETTING OUT!
WE'RE HERE!



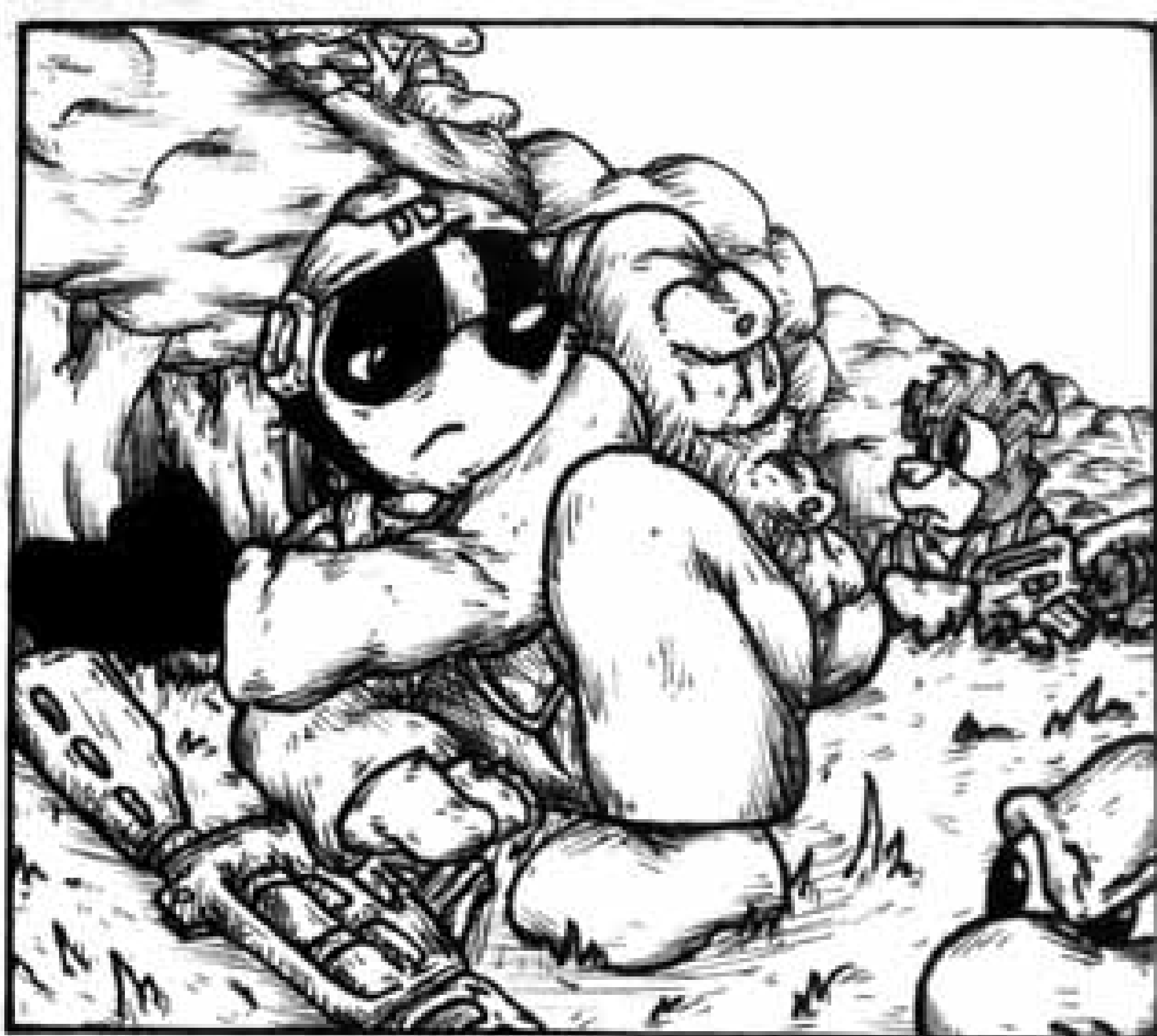
LIEUTENANT WAYRE SPEAKING. WE'RE ON THE GROUND. GET GOING BEFORE THOSE FIGHTERS CATCH UP TO YOU.

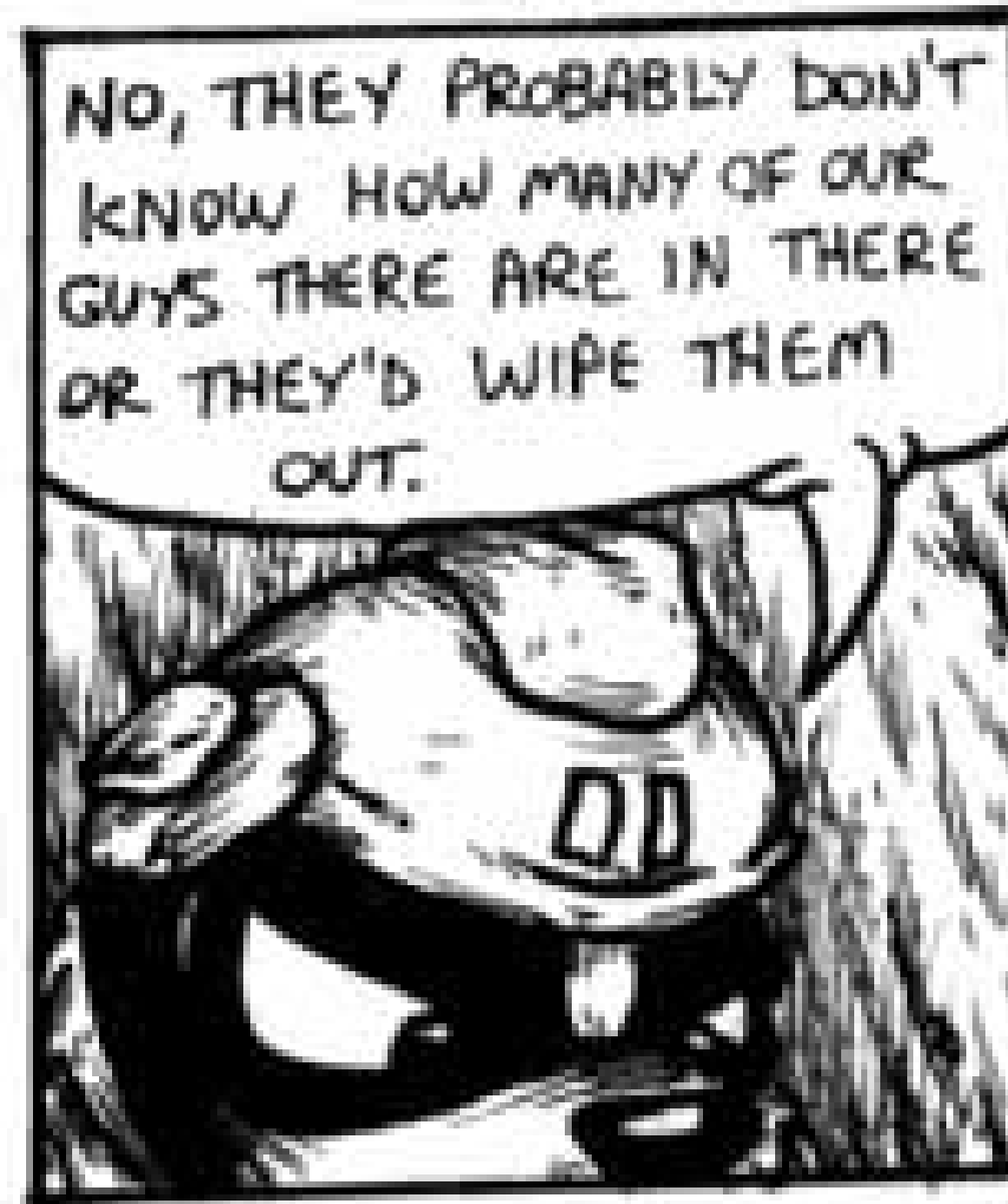
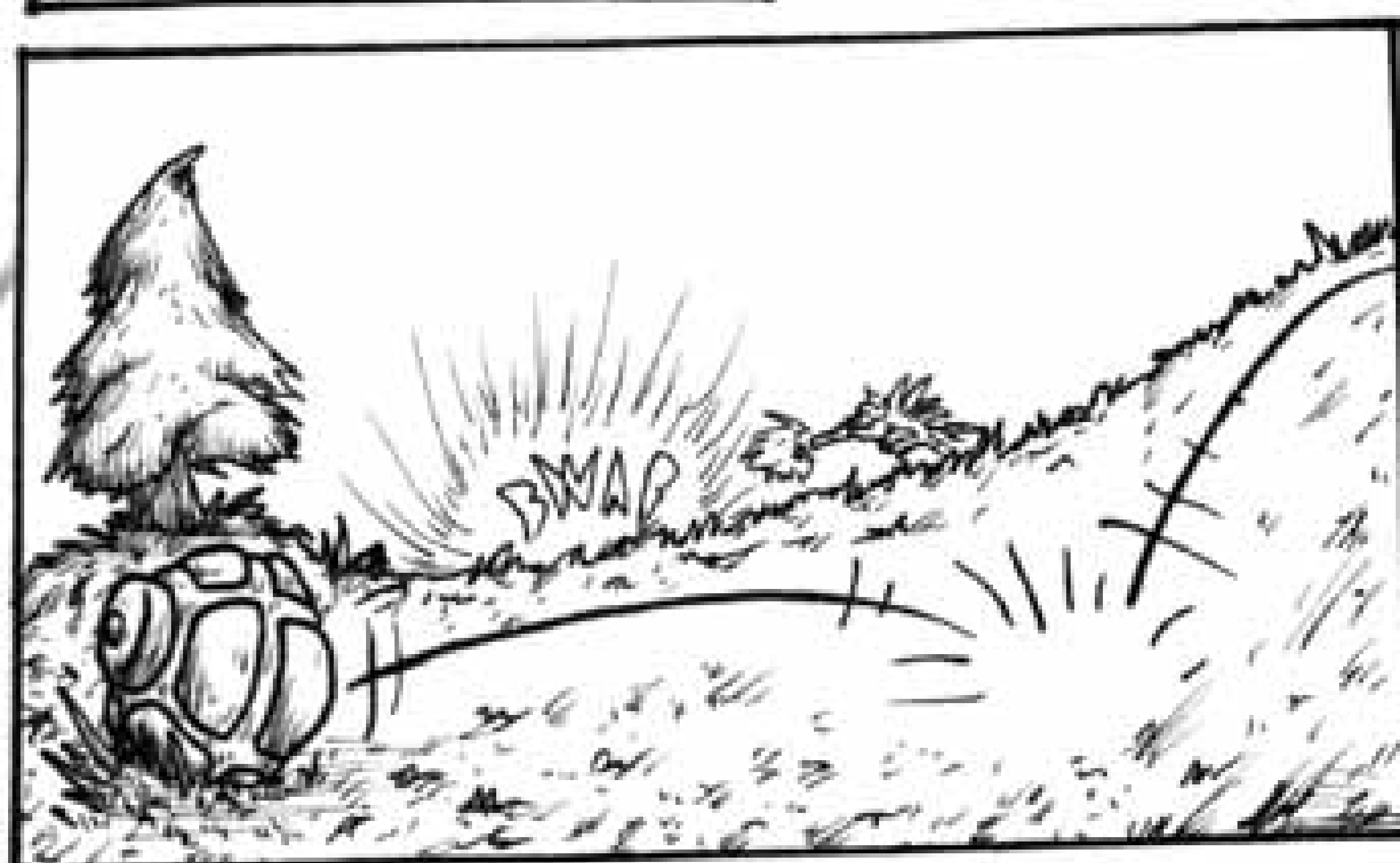
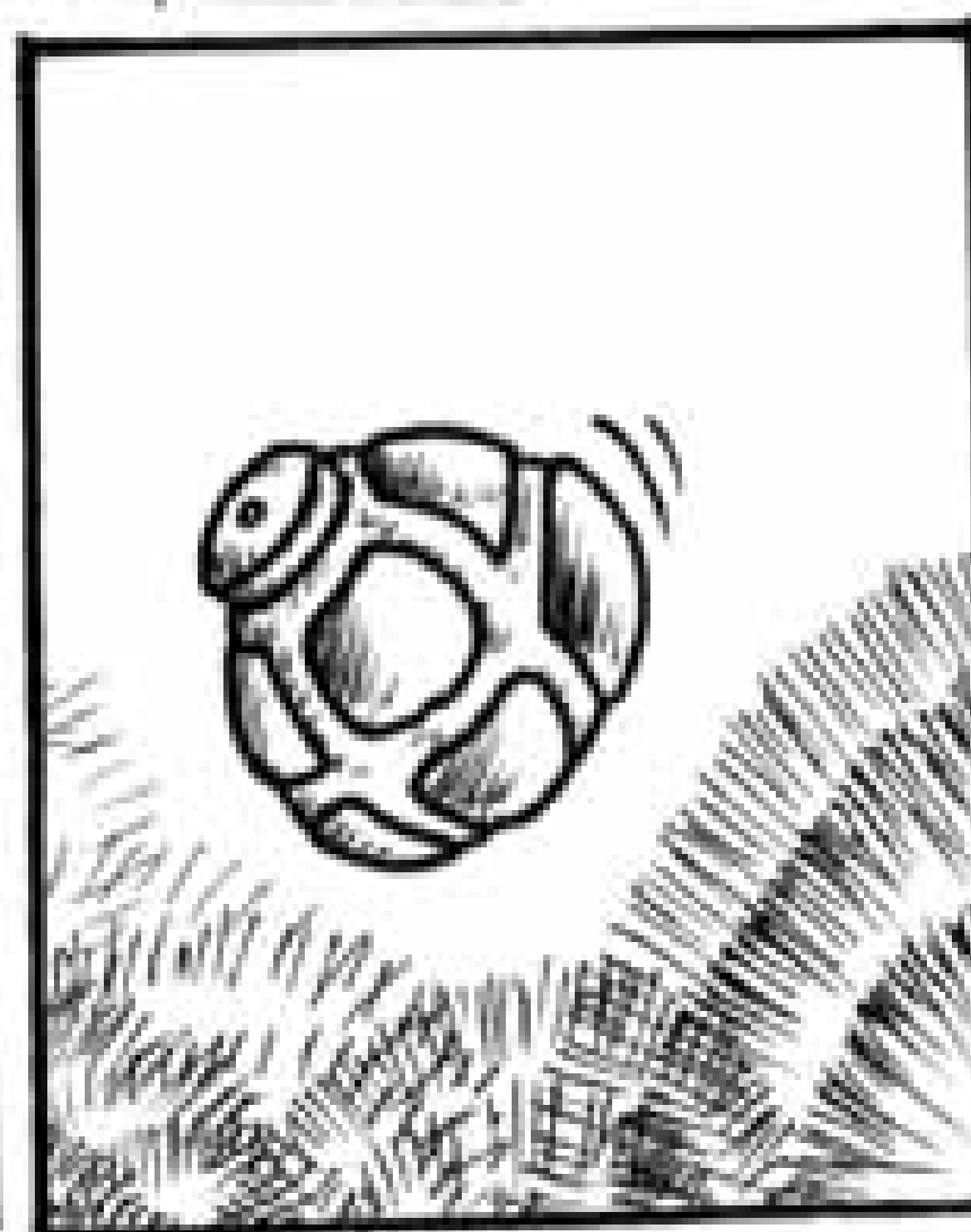
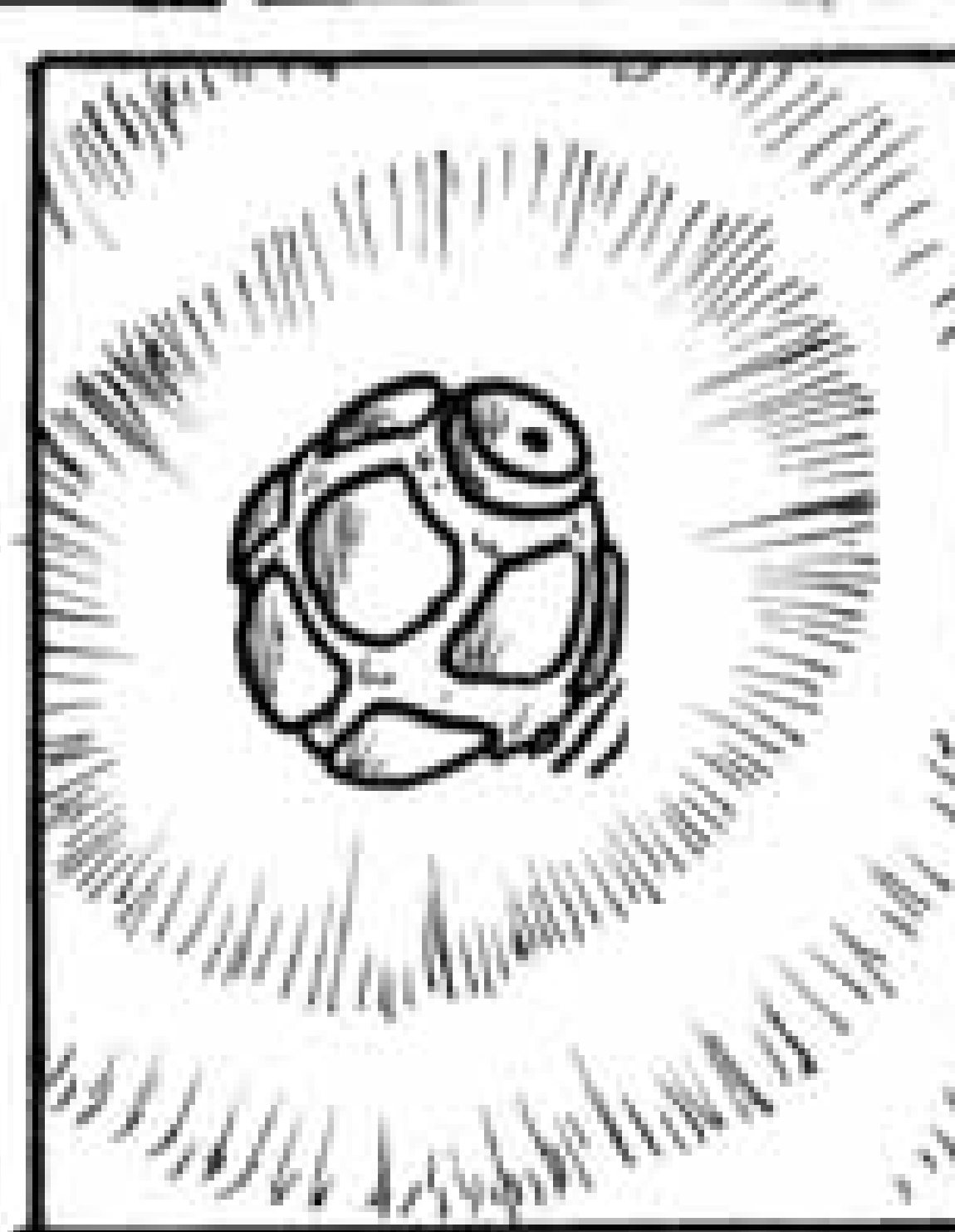
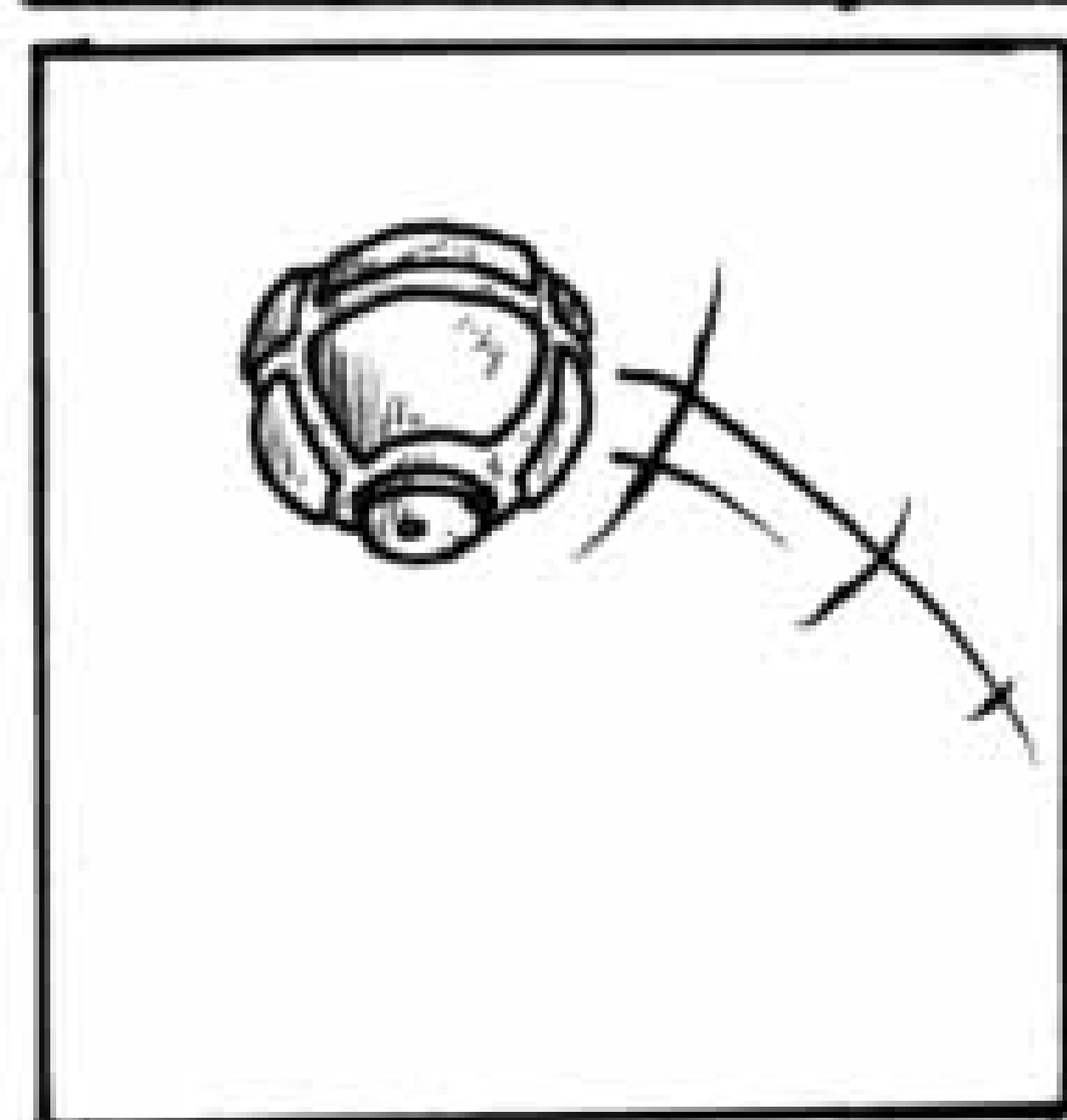
RIGHT! GOOD LUCK, LIEUTENANT. I'LL BE BACK FOR YOU PERSONALLY ASAP. SEE YOU THEN.

RIGHT. LET'S GET GOING. WAZ AND THA, TAKE POINT DOUBLE TIME.

AFTAH YOU, DAHLIN'.

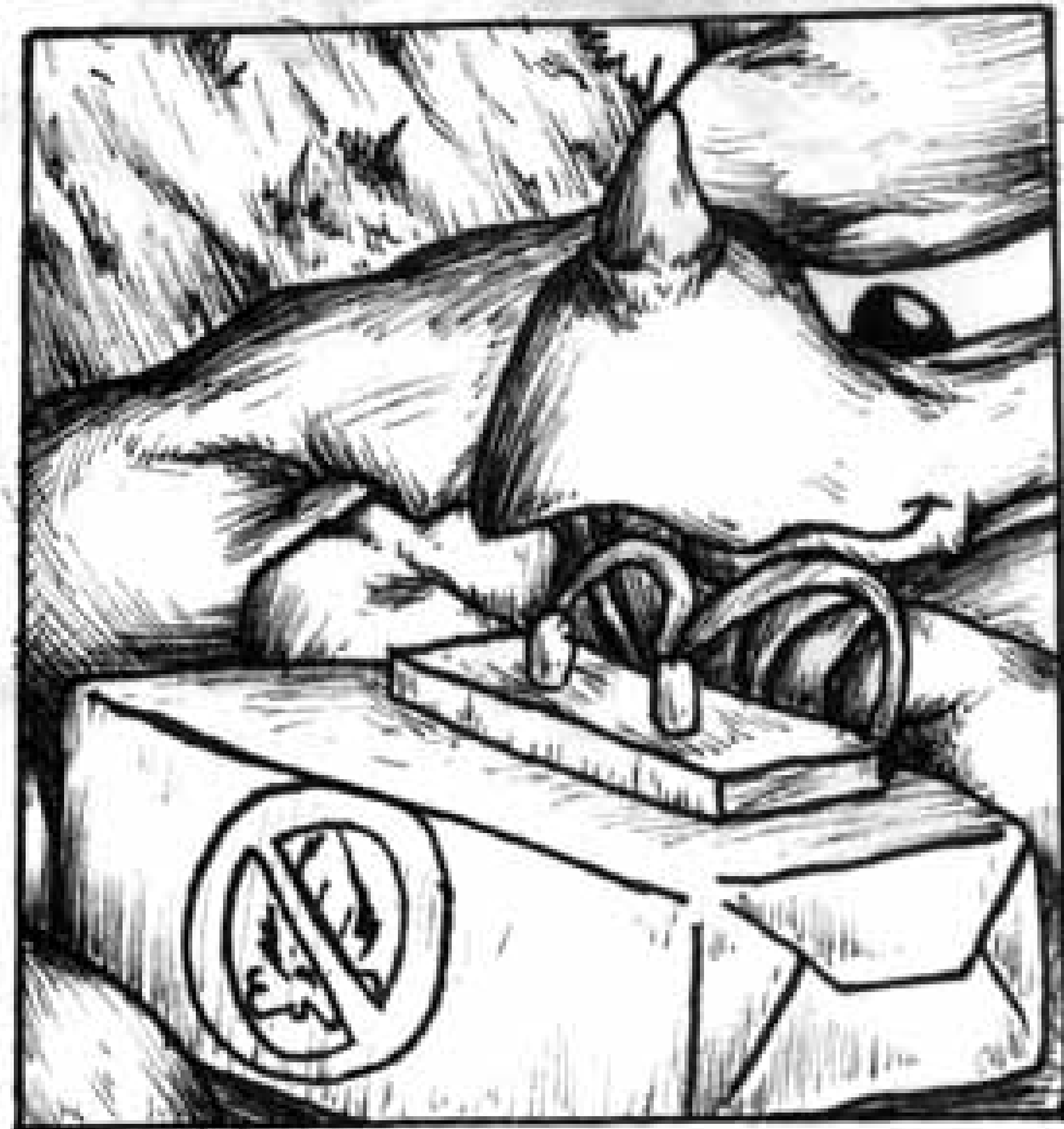


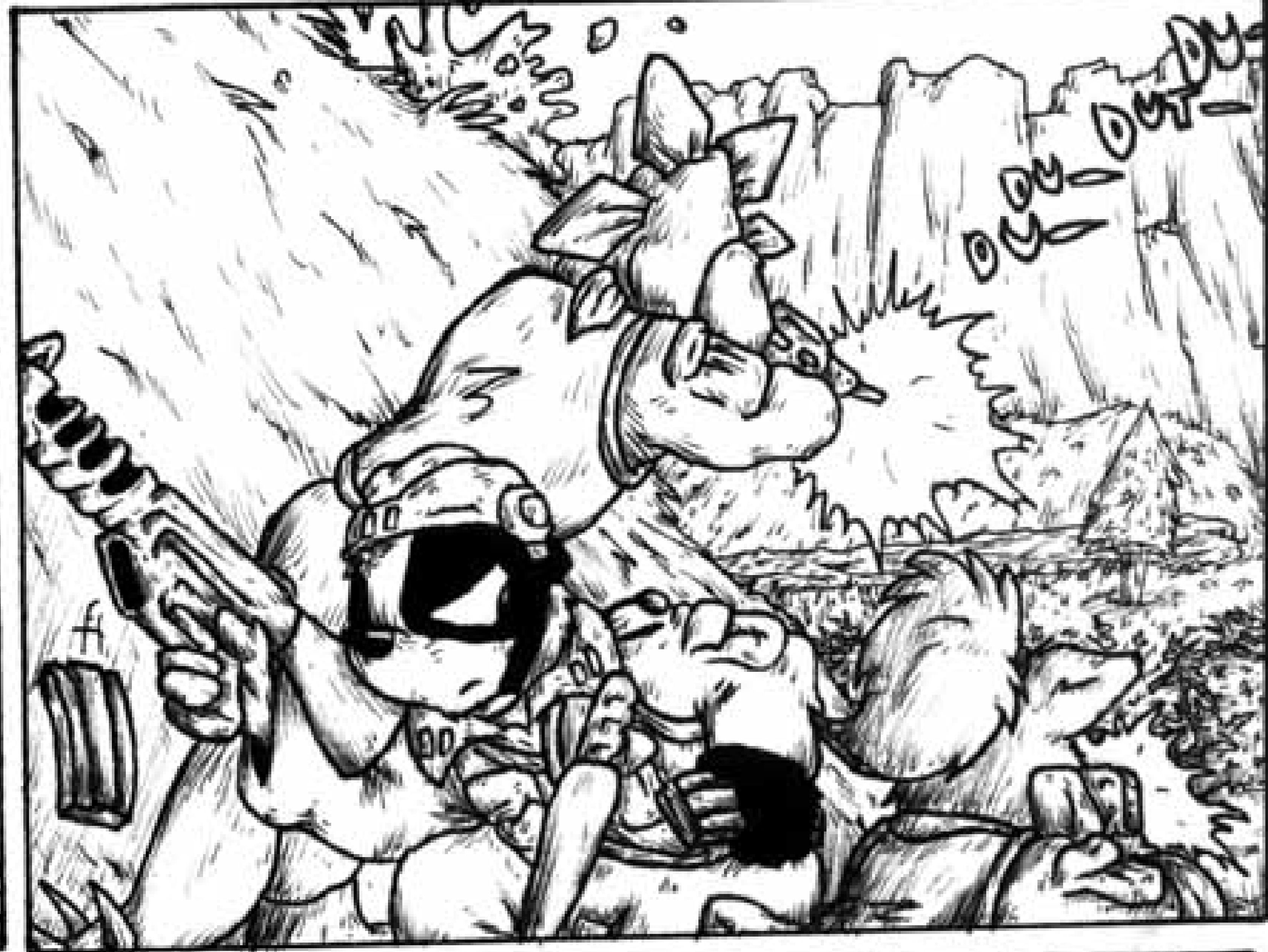












WHAT ELSE COULD IT BE? THEY GET REINFORCED?

BAP BOOSH

SHIT! WE'RE GONNA DIE!

SARGE! FRIENDLIES COMIN' IN!

PING

WHAT?!

STAFF SARGEANT ABRAHM SEID.

MEDIC SARGEANT ARTHUR SULLIVAN. WHAT CAN I DO?

CONFORD? TAKE SARGEANT SULLIVAN TO THE WOUNDED.

YESSIR.

TELL MY FUNKY 1-3 98-59

THIS WAY. BUT ITS POINTLESS. WE'RE NOT GONNA GET OUT OF HERE ALIVE.

KEEP IT TOGETHER, PRIVATE. SEID AND I AREN'T THE ONLY ONES FIGHTING OUT THERE

RIGHT HERE SEARGEANT.

THANK YOU, PRIVATE. GET BACK TO THE LINE. THEY'LL NEED YOU.



MY TEAM IS PUTTING FIRE ON THEM FROM THESE THREE LOCATIONS.

THEIR BACKS SHOULD BE TO US.

IF I COULD GET YOU TO TELL YOUR BOYS TO OPEN FIRE, WE SHOULD CATCH 'EM FROM BEHIND WITH A LOW CHANCE OF CROSSFIRE

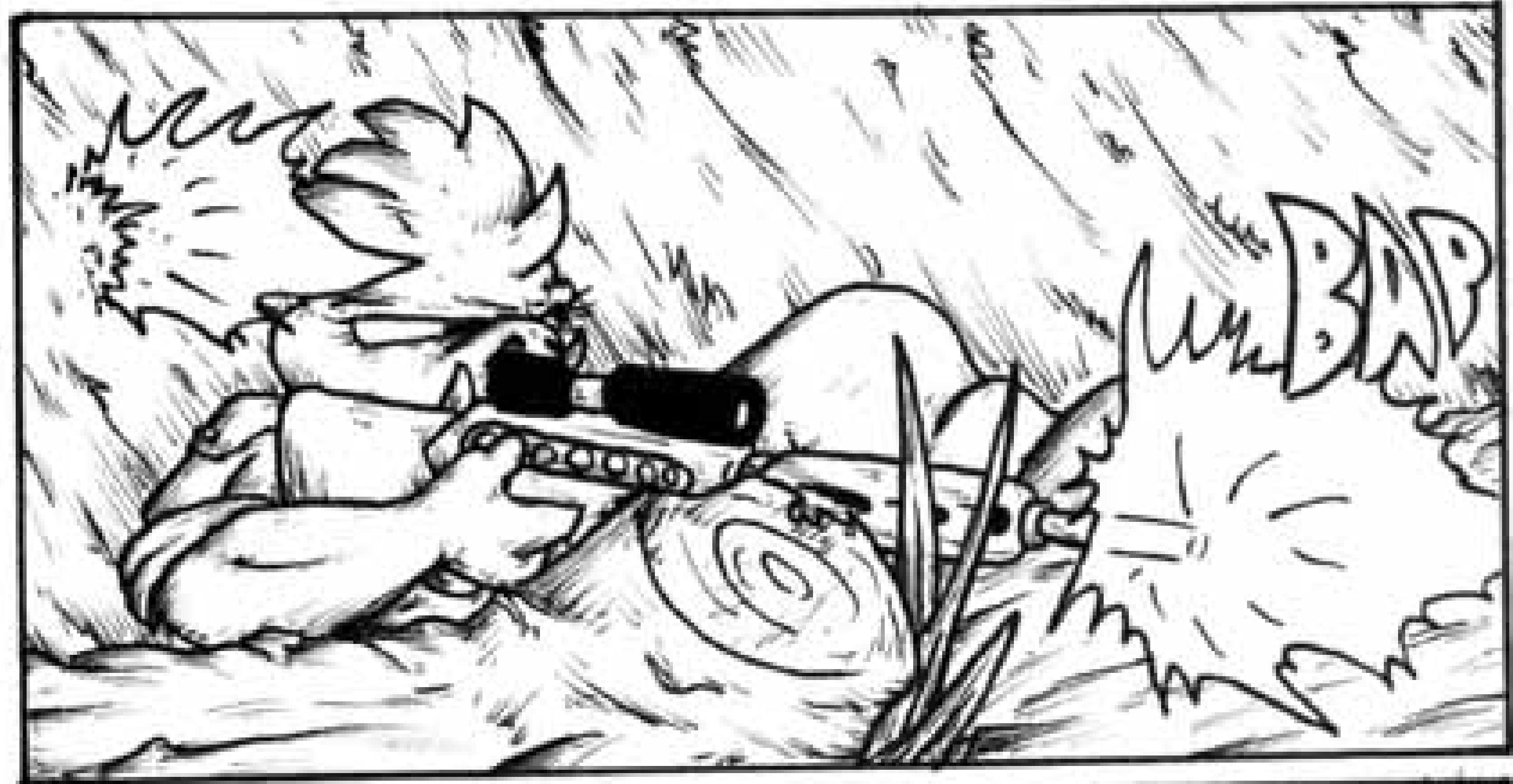
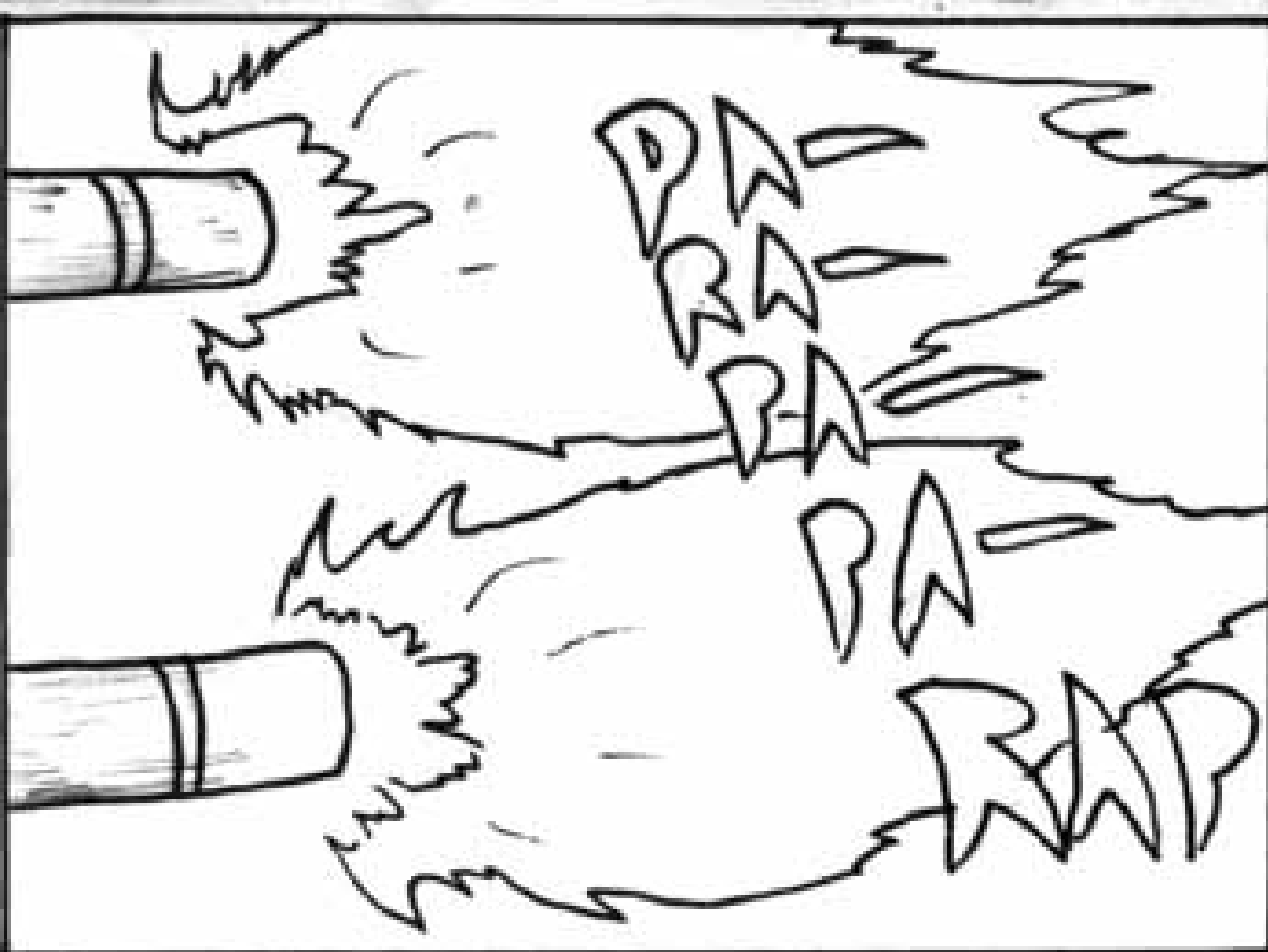
CONFORD. KEDGE. PASS THE WORD. QUICKLY!

YES SARGE

SERGEANT!

OPEN FIRE!

GOOD FURS DIE HARD!!





FRIENDS! WE'RE
COMING OUT!

OYN?
WAZ?
STAY PUT
AND KEEP
AN EYE OUT

YES
SIR!

YOU TWO COME
WITH ME.

SIR, THERE ARE TWELVE MARINES STILL
ALIVE. MOST ARE FIT TO FIGHT AND ALL
BUT TWO OF THEM SEEM ABLE TO MOVE UNDER
THEIR OWN POWER.

GOOD
WORK,
SARGE.

WHAT ARE YOUR NAMES,
SOLDIERS?

PRIVATE
THYT, SIR.

B. CHARLIE
SEVENTEEN.
PRIVATE
TAYKE

GO WITH THYT & TAYKE
TO RETRIEVE OUR PACKS.

YES
SIR.

BRING UP THE REST OF THE TEAM ON YOUR
WAY BACK.

YOU GOT IT. C'MON, BOYS.

WE PASSED OVER A FORT
BEFORE WE WERE DROPPED OFF.
IT LOOKED HASTILY DESERTED AND
I'LL BET IT'S WELL-STOCKED IF
WE COULD FIND IT.

I WAS
THINKING THE
SAME THING. LET'S
GET THEM MOVING

GET IT TOGETHER, MARINES.
WE'LL BE MOVING OUT SOON!

ON THE
BOUNCE,
B. CHARLIE
SEVENTEEN

SHIT...! YOU SF
GUYS DON'T LIKE
TO TRAVEL
LIGHT, DO YA?

WHERE'S LT. BART?

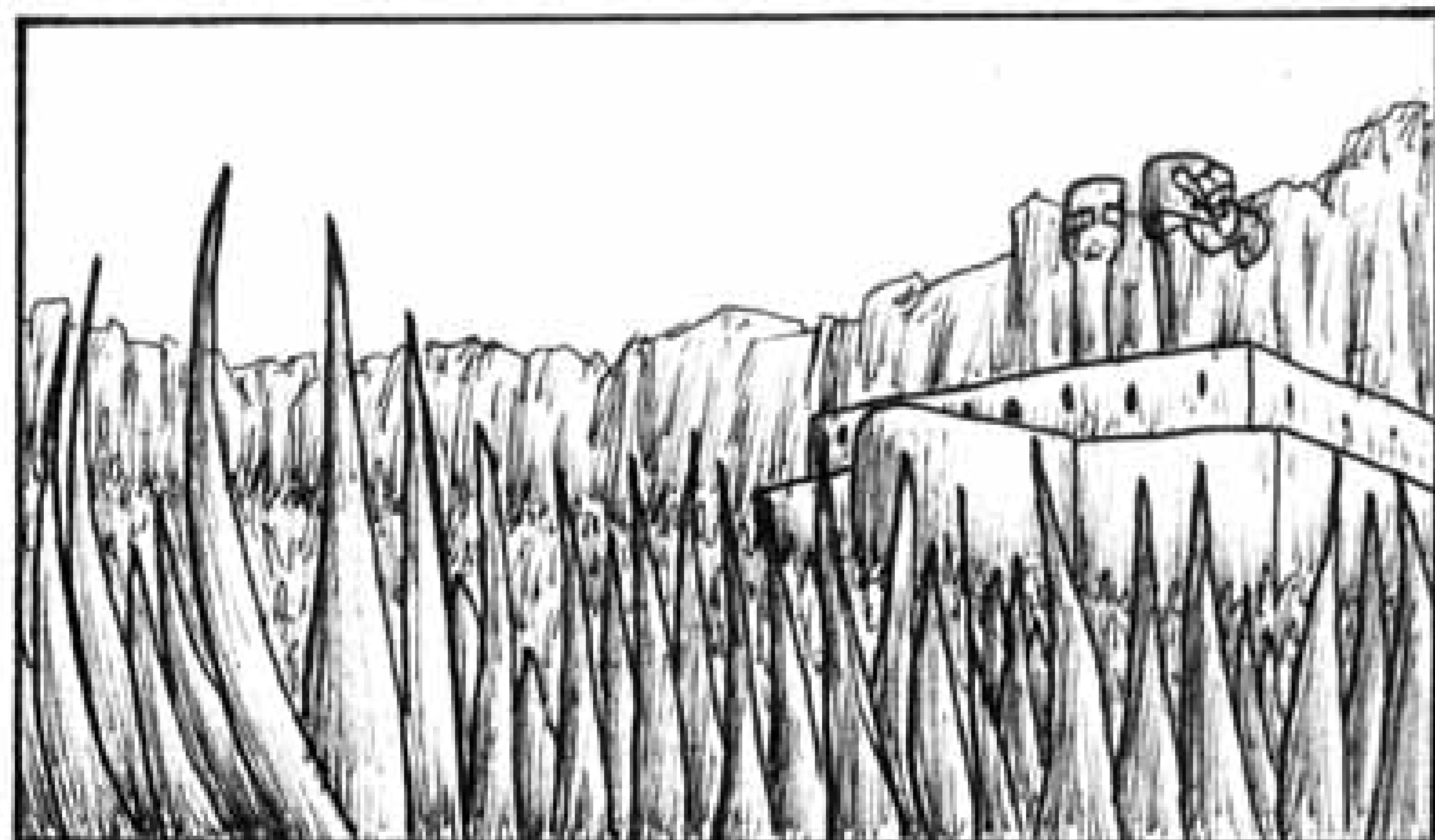
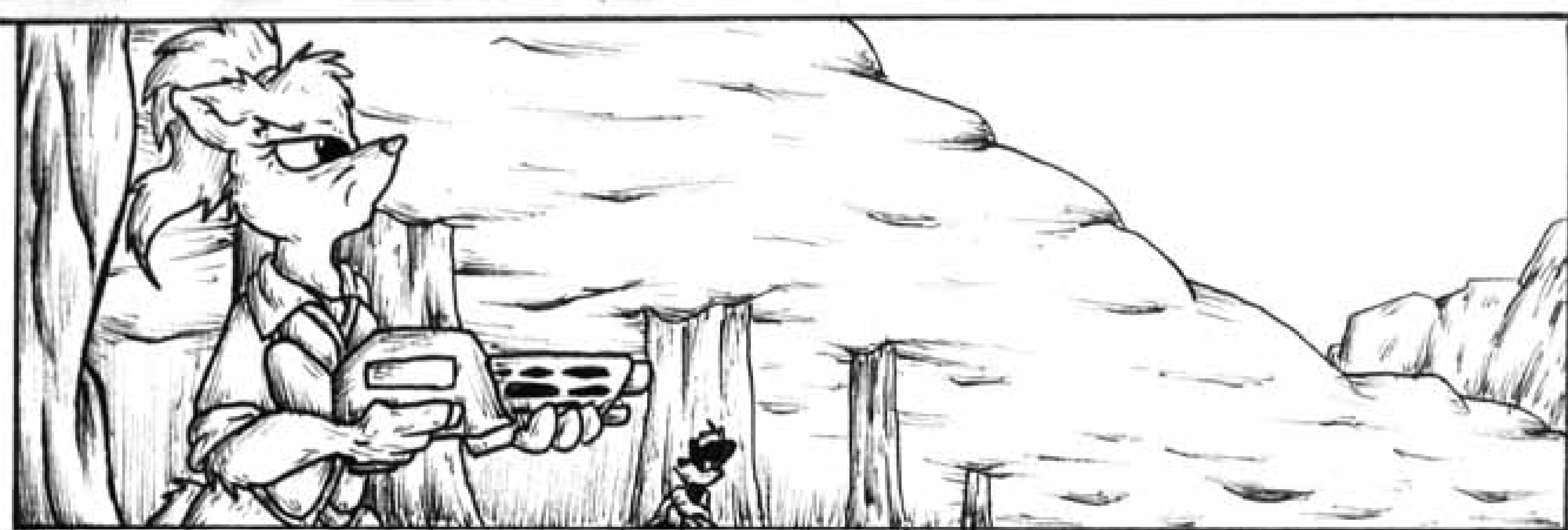
MAKE SURE TO
PACK WHAT YOU NEED
TO LAST A LONG HIKE.
AMMO, WATER & FOOD

SIR, HE WAS
KILLED ABOUT
TEN MINUTES
BEFORE YOU
ARRIVED.











CAP TO TRI-POINT, OVER.

TRI-POINT HERE. ROCK'S A GOOD FALLBACK POINT.
MANY DEFENSIVE POSITIONS BEHIND HOME BASE.
OVER.

SCAR TO CAP

THIS FIELD WILL
GIVE US A LOT OF
EARLY WARNING, BUT
THESE TREES WON'T
STAND UP TO TANKS.
WE SHOULD START
RIGGING THIS AREA
ASAP.

I HATE THIS
FUCKING WEATHER
JUST KEEP
LOOKIN' DOWN.
IT KEEPS THE
RAIN OUT OF YOUR
EYES

I LOVE
THE RAIN...

...BACK WHEN I WAS A SNIPER, THE RAIN
ALWAYS GAVE ME AT LEAST ONE FREE SHOT
BECAUSE EVERYONE WAS ALWAYS LOOKING DOWN
AND DIDN'T SEE WHERE THE SHOT CAME FROM

FIVE BUCKS? YOU IN
THAT TOWER YET?

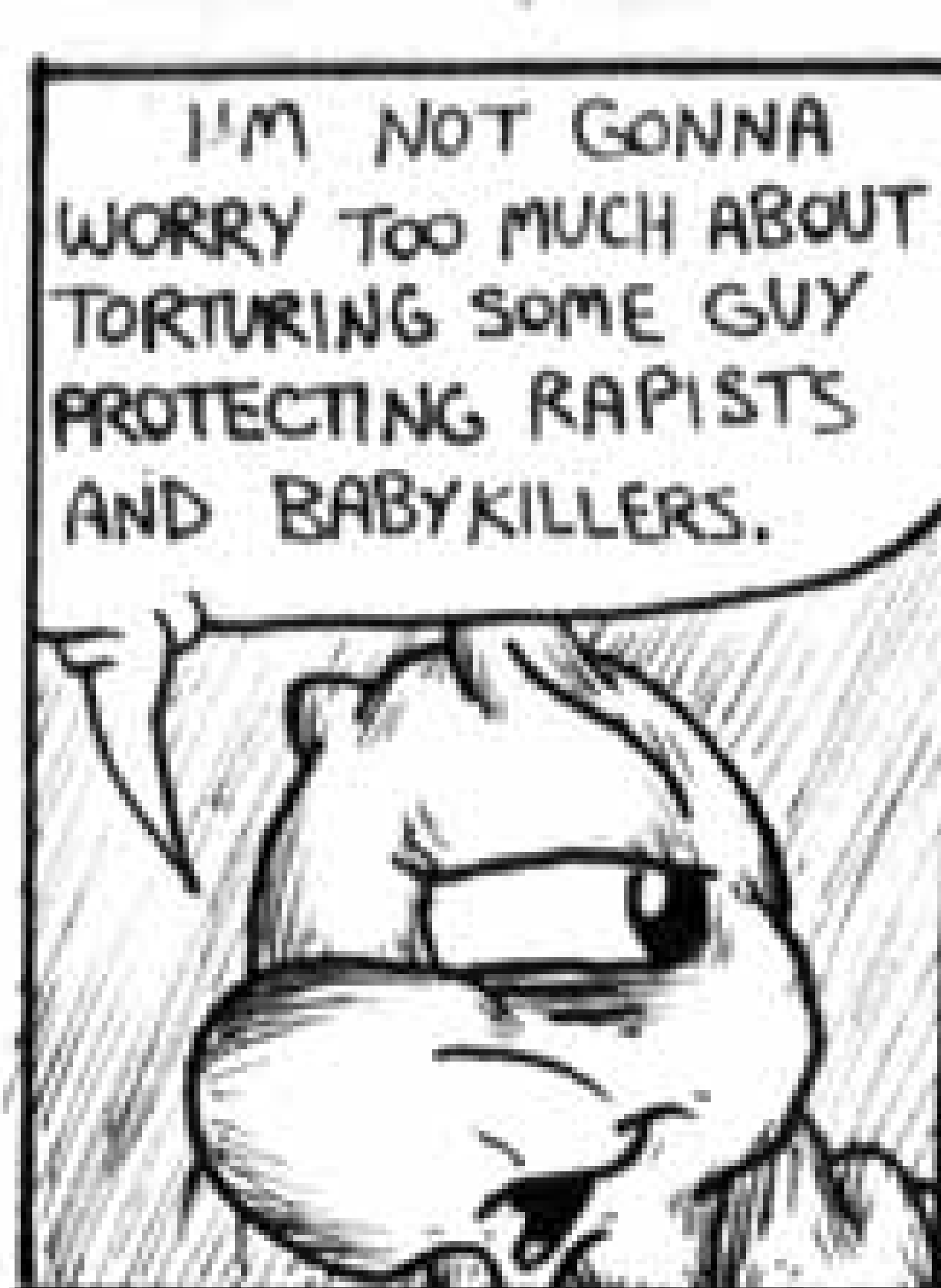
FIVE BUCKS IN POSITION.
WE CAN SEE BOTH TEAMS FROM
HERE. READY TO OFFER
ASSISTANCE FROM A DISTANCE
OUT.

FIVE BUCKS?

HEH. YEAH. DURING AN
ASSAULT, WAZ BET ME
FIVE BUCKS I COULDN'T
SHOOT A SENTRY IN
THE NUTS.

THAT'S AWFUL!

HEY! I PUT THE
OTHER BULLET IN
HIM TOO!





AY BOI! YA KNOW
"THE RED RIVER VALLEY"?

um...
NO.



'OR THIZ VAH-LAAY THAY SAY
YEW R' GOOIN'

NAY-VIR MOOR
WYL AYE SEE
YER SMILIN' FACE!



JUS' REY-MEM-BUR THE
RED RIVER VAH-LAAY!



AN' THE COWBOII
WHO LUVED YEW SO
TREW WWW



oooooooooooo!



WAZ! I THOUGHT YOU WERE
UNDER ORDERS NEVER TO SING
THAT SONG OUTSIDE OF
THE SHOWERS!



WE DON'T DARE TRY THE RADIO ANYMORE
SIR...

WE CAN'T BROADCAST LONG ENOUGH
TO GET INTO DEEP SPACE WITHOUT
RISKING A SIGNAL
TRACE.

IN THAT CASE, PACK IT UP FOR THE NIGHT.
WE'LL TRY AGAIN LATER. GO JOIN THE OTHERS IN
THE AUDITORIUM.

WELL, WE WERE PLANNING ON HANGING
OUT HERE, SIR.

RIGHT. WELL, DON'T STAY UP
TOO LATE. WE NEED TO START ON
THAT GREENHOUSE TOMORROW!

DO YOU REALLY THINK WE'LL BE
HERE LONG ENOUGH TO NEED IT?

IN ALL THINGS WE
HOPE FOR THE BEST
AND PREPARE FOR THE
WORST.

SIR, ABOUT THAT FLAG
OUTSIDE --

I DON'T LIKE LIVING UNDER AN
ENEMY BANNER EITHER, AND IT'S
APPARANT THEY'RE SPREAD OUT. BUT
SOONER OR LATER THEY'LL SEND
SOMEONE OUT HERE AND WE
NEED TO CREATE THE ILLUSION
THAT THEY'RE STILL IN CONTROL
FOR AS LONG AS WE'RE CUT
OFF FROM OUR FLEET



OKAY, OKAY, WHY NOT
LET ME PLAY SOMETHING
THAT ISN'T ABOUT DYING,
HUH?



HEY TAYKE! PLAY
THAT ONE YOU USED
TO PLAY WHEN WE WERE
IN BOOT.



WELL... I -- UHM..... OKAY.



I DIDN'T WRITE THIS ONE BUT
HERE IT GOES...



OH I'VE JUST COME FROM
THE LAND OF THE SUN, FROM
A WAR THAT MUST BE WON
IN THE NAME OF TRUTH



WE ARE SOLDIERS SO BRAVE. YOUR FREEDOMS
WE WILL SAVE WITH OUR RIFLES AND GRENADES
AND SOME HELP FROM GOD...



I WANT TO SEE MY FAMILY. MY
WIFE AND CHILD WAITING FOR ME.
GOT TO GO HOME. I FEEL SO
ALONE, CAN'T YOU SEE...





TELL ME ABOUT YOUR FAMILY, SHED.



I HAD A BROTHER. WHEN MARS ASKED FOR EARTH'S HELP IN THE WAR HE WAS ALREADY IN THE ARMY. WE GOT THE LETTER ABOUT HIM BEING DEAD A COUPLE MONTHS LATER. SAME DAY I GOT MY DRAFT NOTICE.

WHAT'S YOUR BROTHER'S NAME?



ROLAND. WHEN WE WERE LITTLE HE WANTED TO BE A GUNSLINGER JUST LIKE IN THE BOOKS WE USED TO READ. NOT THAT IT EVEN MATTERS ANYMORE.



I'VE GOT A YOUNGER SISTER. SHE SHOULD STILL BE IN GRADE SCH —



SSSS--A-A-A !!!

SORRY, SORRY. I FOUND IT. I'M TAKING IT OUT NOW.



THERE. THAT'S IT. THAT SHOULD AT LEAST MAKE THE INFECTION RECEDE. YOU'LL BE MORE COMFORTABLE IN A FEW DAYS.



DOC...? AM I GOING TO BE ALL RIGHT...?

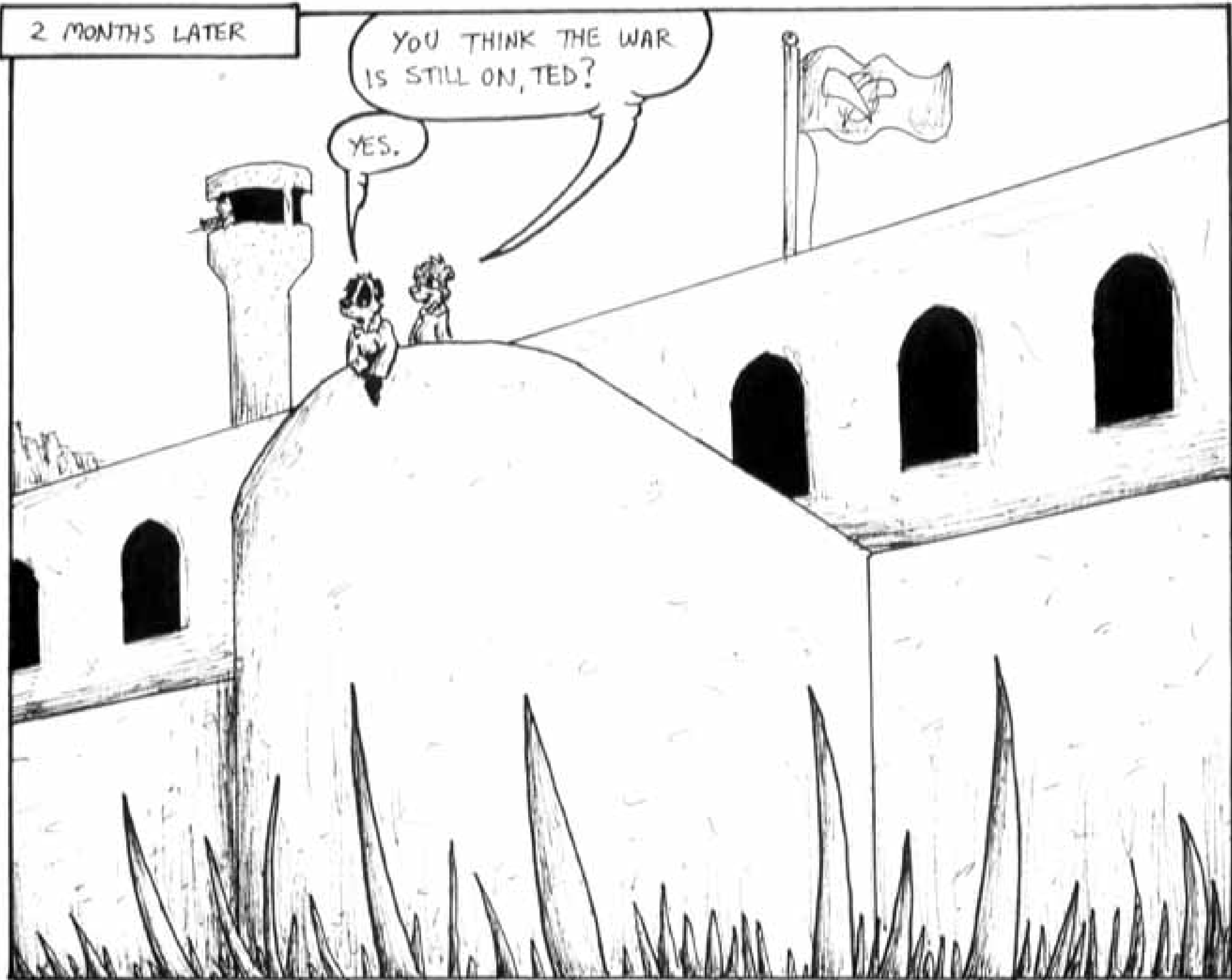
I'M SORRY, SHED. I JUST DON'T KNOW.



2 MONTHS LATER

YOU THINK THE WAR IS STILL ON, TED?

YES.



WE WOULD HAVE SEEN SHIPS FROM ONE SIDE OR THE OTHER STARTING TO MOVE IN.

WHAT IF WE WIN?



MY PARENTS READ AN ARTICLE IN THE TOWN PAPER ABOUT HOW A LOCAL MARINE THOUGHT DEAD "JUST WALKED OUT OF THE WOODS OF SOME BACKWARDS PLANET" AND I'LL ACCEPT MY MEDAL OF HONOR FROM THE POTUS HIMSELF.

WHAT IF WE LOSE?



HERE'S AS GOOD A PLACE AS ANY TO MAKE A LAST STAND.

SHOULDN'T WE START NOW?



WE SHOULD START PREPARING FOR IT. NOW... HOW IS YOUR PATIENT?

WELL...



I CAN'T DO ANYTHING ELSE FOR SHED. SHE'LL DIE ANY DAY NOW. MAYBE EVEN TONIGHT. THE POISON IN THE ENEMY ROUNDS IS UNTREATABLE.



I'M GOING TO GO KEEP AN EYE ON HER. I'LL TALK TO YOU LATER.



SIR. " KEDGE?



YOU ALL RIGHT?

A LITTLE HOME-SICK, SIR.



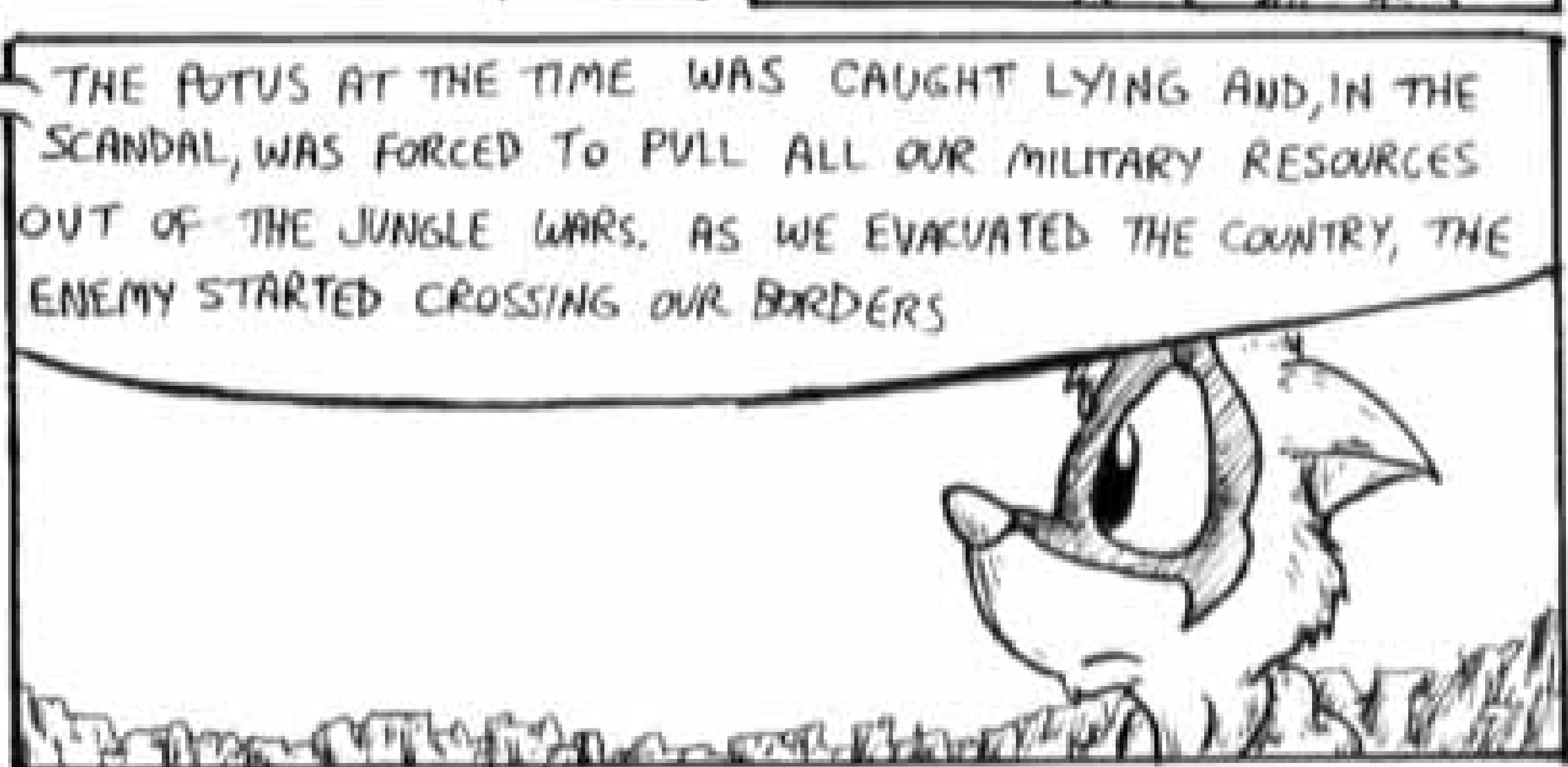
I'VE GOT TO ASK, SIR, WHY DID YOU GUYS COME BACK FOR US? REALLY.



WELL, I SUPPOSE I'M IN THE MOOD TO TELL AN AWFUL STORY. I WAS ABOUT YOUR AGE...



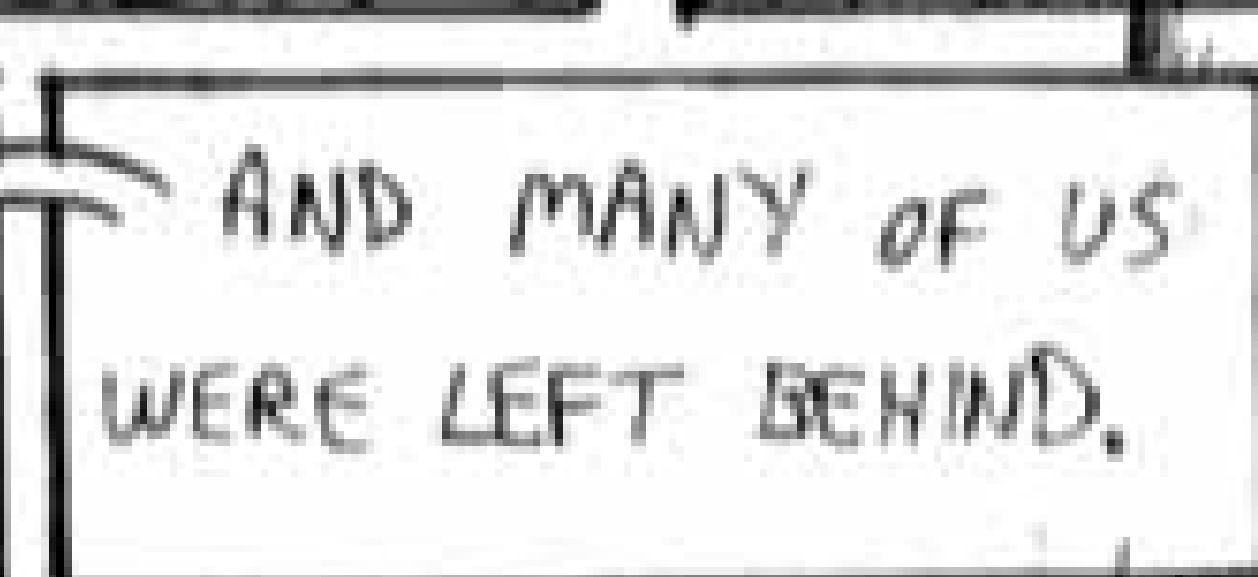
THE POTUS AT THE TIME WAS CAUGHT LYING AND, IN THE SCANDAL, WAS FORCED TO PULL ALL OUR MILITARY RESOURCES OUT OF THE JUNGLE WARS. AS WE EVACUATED THE COUNTRY, THE ENEMY STARTED CROSSING OUR BORDERS



AS YOU CAN IMAGINE IT WAS A REALLY DISORGANIZED AFFAIR



AND MANY OF US WERE LEFT BEHIND.



IT WAS A PANICKED RUN
WITH THE WHOLE OF
OUR ENEMY'S ARMY
BEHIND US.



WHEN WE GOT TO THE
SHORE, WE HAD TO SWIM TO
THE SHIP UNDER FIRE



OF THE 200-SOME SOLDIERS WHO
STARTED WITH US, ARTY, MYSELF AND
THREE OTHERS WERE THE ONLY ONES THAT
SURVIVED AND NO ONE UNDERSTOOD WHY WE
DIDN'T LET GO OF OUR GUNS UNTIL
WE WERE HOME.



I HAVE COME TO
UNDERSTAND THAT IT WAS
GOD'S OWN HAND THAT HAD
SAVED ME AND I HAD A DEBT
TO PAY TO HIM.



COMING BACK FOR YOU
AND THE REST HOPEFULLY
SQUARES ME AWAY WITH
HIM.



I WOULD HAVE THOUGHT A SOLDIER WOULD HAVE
TO ABANDON GOD TO DO HIS DUTY.



I TELL YOU, KEDGE, YOU AND OTHERS MAY
THINK WHAT YOU LIKE, BUT I WOULDN'T BE
ABLE TO BE A SOLDIER WITHOUT HIM.



I COULDN'T KILL ANOTHER MAN IF I DIDN'T
KNOW I WAS SENDING HIM TO ANOTHER LIFE
AND NOT TO AN OBLIVION.
I NEED GOD TO DO
MY DUTY AS A
SOLDIER



GOD HIMSELF TOLD US
WE SHOULDN'T KILL EACH
OTHER.



IF WE WEREN'T HERE FIGHTING THESE
THINGS, THEY WOULD BE ON EARTH. WE
KNOW THIS.



THEY WOULD COME AND
KILL YOU, ME, OUR FAMILIES
AND OUR LOVED ONES JUST
LIKE THEY HAVE ON OTHER
WORLDS.



I BELIEVE THAT IF I KNEW
MY FRIENDS AND FAMILY COULD BE
KILLED AND I HAD THE POWER TO
PREVENT IT BUT DID NOTHING, I
WOULD BE GUILTY OF MURDER.



YES, BUT MURDERING TO
PREVENT MURDER?



YOU'RE THINKING WITH
YOUR HEART, BUT NOT YOUR
HEAD. REMEMBER OUR
COLONIES ON TITAN? THE
SLAUGHTER THAT HAPPENED
THERE?



WE DON'T KILL TO PROVE WE'RE RIGHT.
WE KILL TO PREVENT GENOCIDE. ITS NOT
SO MUCH MURDER AS IT IS SELF DEFENSE

I DON'T KNOW.
WHAT MAKES OUR
CAUSE SO RIGHT?



BECAUSE OF PEOPLE
LIKE YOU, KEDGE.



WE DON'T WANT TO
DO IT. WE DON'T WANT
TO FIGHT.



BUT WE WILL FIGHT UNTIL
THEY CAN SEE THAT ITS IN
THEIR BEST INTEREST TO
STOP THEIR KILLING AND
LEAVE US IN PEACE.



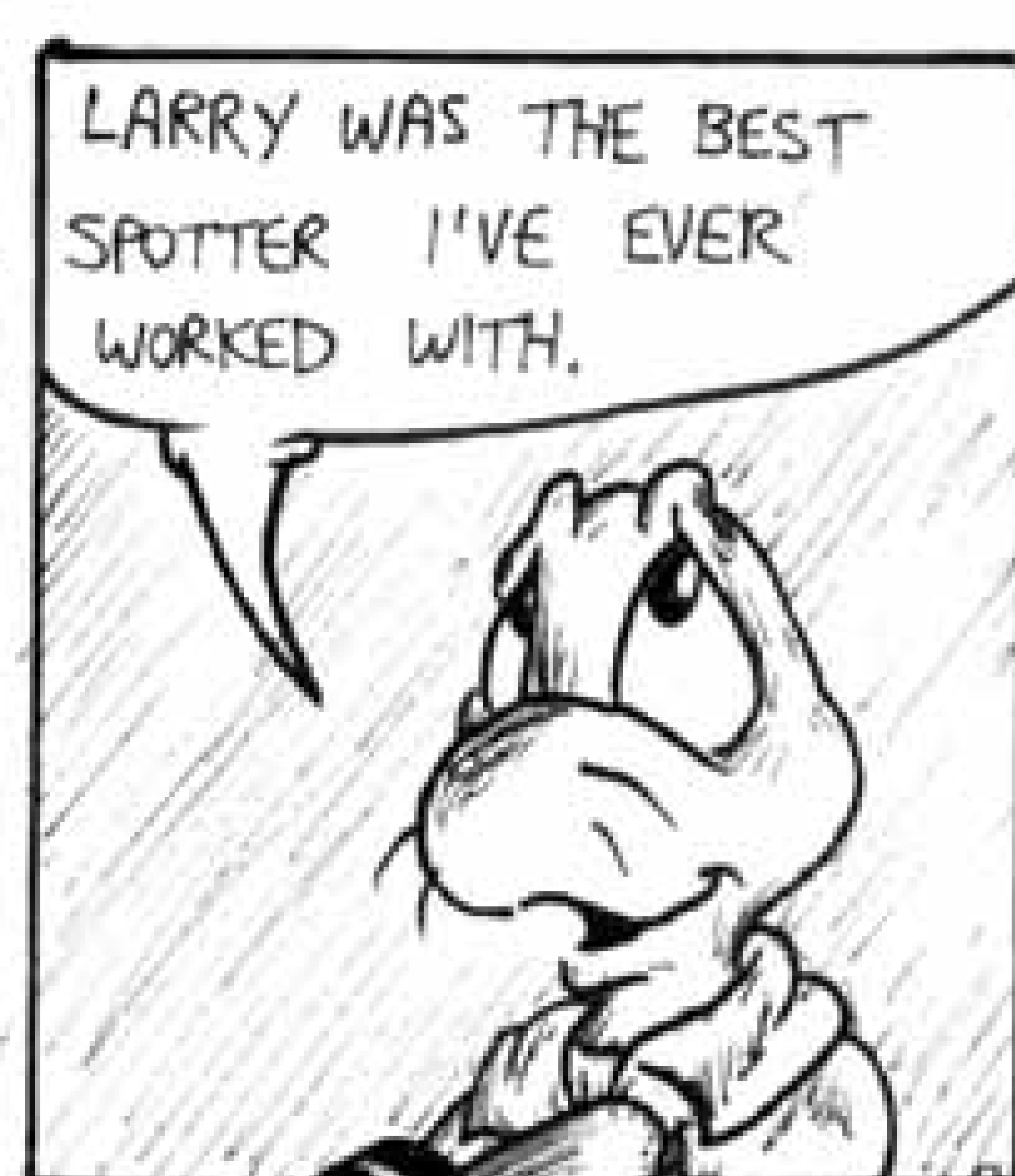




AND THEN THERE WAS LARRY.



TELL ME ABOUT LARRY



LARRY WAS THE BEST SPOTTER I'VE EVER WORKED WITH.



LARRY COULDN'T SHOOT FOR SHIT. I HAD TO HELP HIM OUT WHENEVER WE HAD A PHYSICAL REVIEW AND SHOOT HIS TARGETS FOR HIM.



HE ALWAYS CARRIED A LITTLE WALKMAN WITH COUNTRY MUSIC IN IT. NOT ROCKABILLY STUFF, BUT THAT OLD GODAWFUL YODELING CRAP.



ANOTHER DRINK?

SURE.



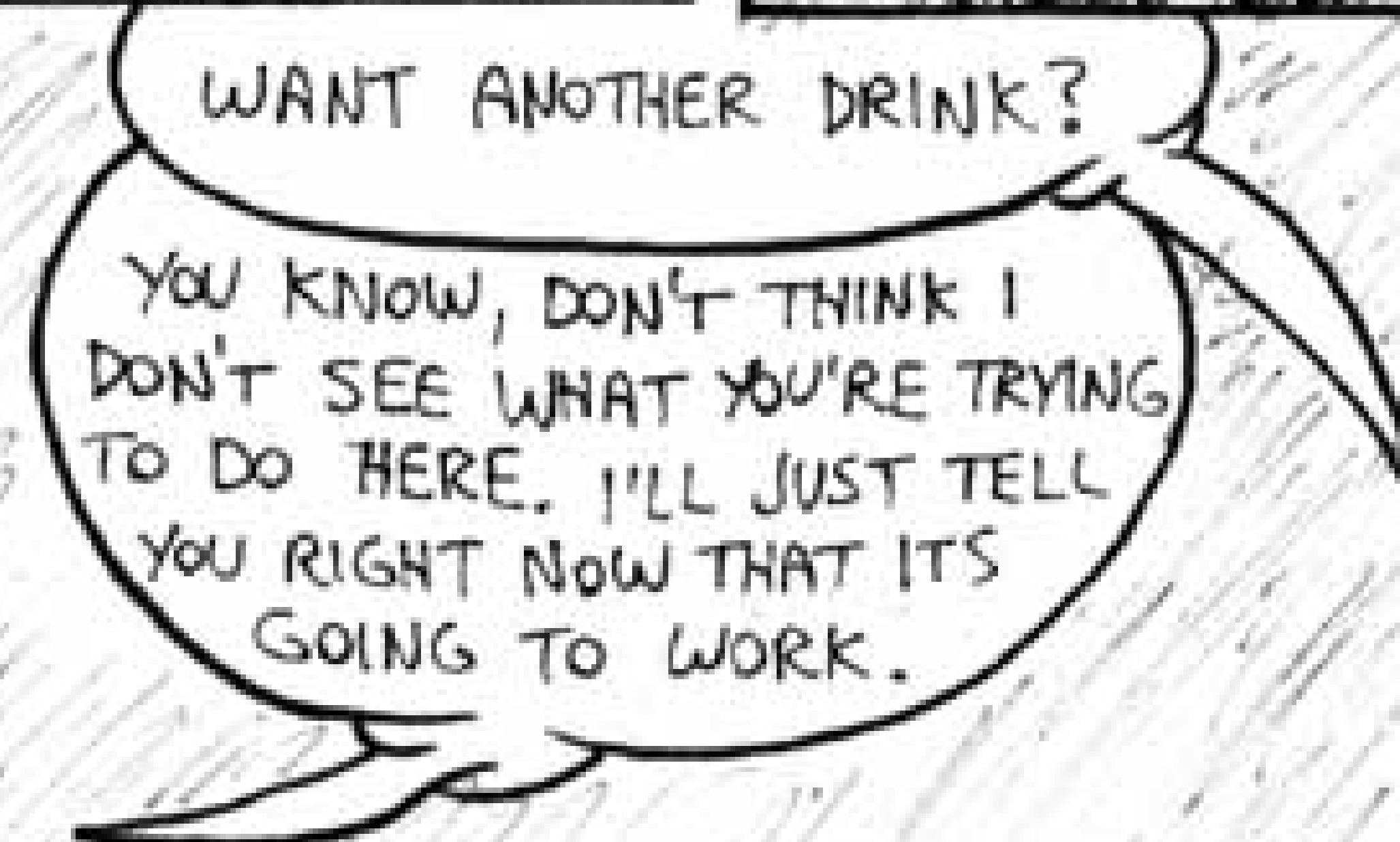
THANKS



LIKE I SAID, LARRY WAS A GREAT SPOTTER. THE BEST.



...BUT HE MISSED ONE.



WANT ANOTHER DRINK?

YOU KNOW, DON'T THINK I DON'T SEE WHAT YOU'RE TRYING TO DO HERE. I'LL JUST TELL YOU RIGHT NOW THAT IT'S GOING TO WORK.



OKAY KEDGE. YOU GET TO BED,
I'LL TAKE WATCH NOW.



THANKS THEIZ. HOW'RE
YOU DOING LATELY?

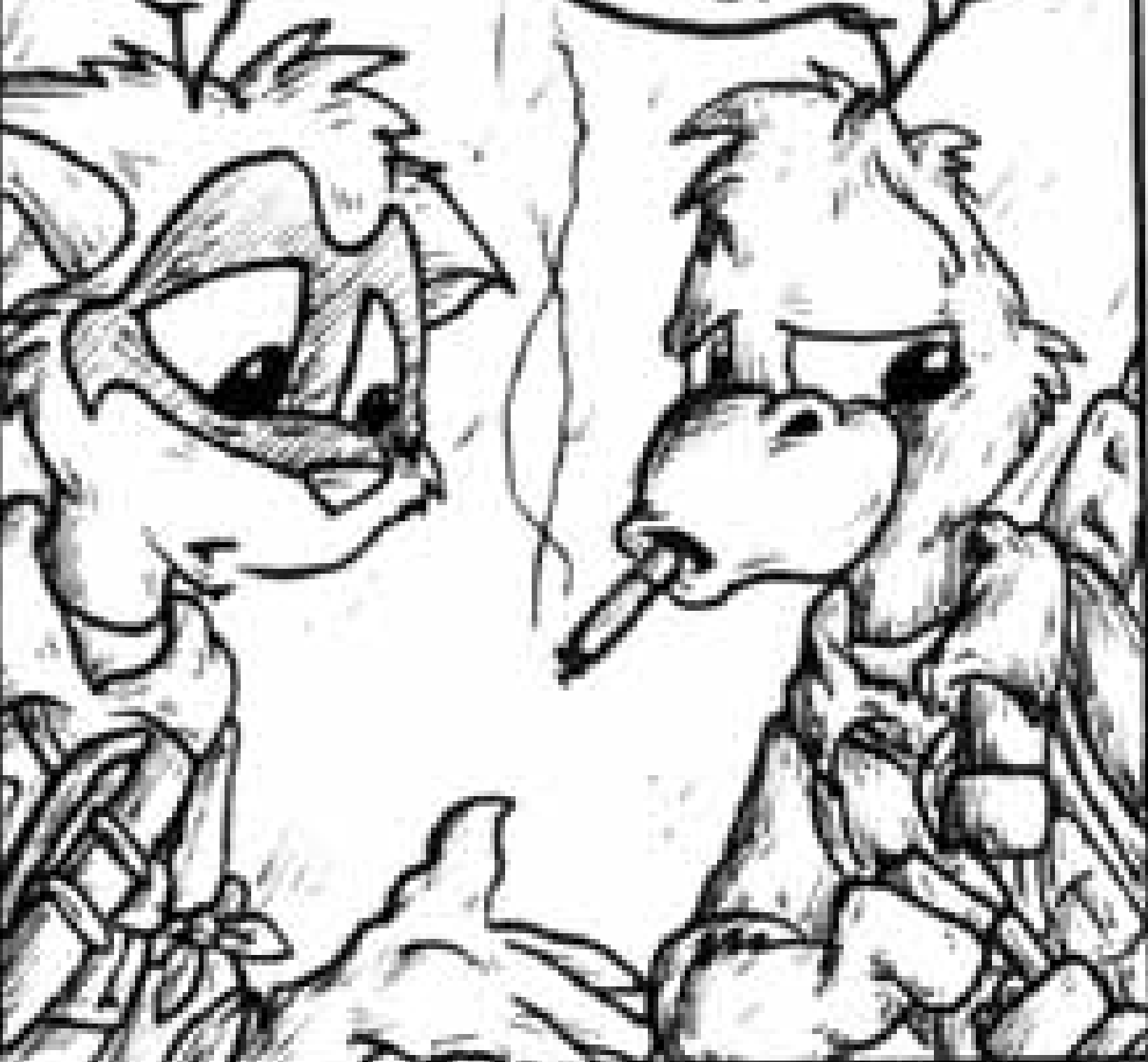


BETTER. LOTS BETTER.



WHERE'D YOU GET
THAT?

FOUND'EM BEHIND
SOME STUFF IN THE
STORE ROOM. HAVE
ONE.



WHAT'S THE
BRAND?

MAN, DOES IT EVEN
MATTER? LABEL'S WORN
OFF ANYWAY.



CAFF
CAFF
UGH!

YEAH...FIRST COUPLE
ARE A LITTLE ROUGH. I
ONLY STARTED UP
YESTERDAY MYSELF.



COUGH I'LL TAKE YOUR WORD
FOR IT. ANY PORT IN THE
STORM, I GUESS, BUT THIS IS
WHY YOU'RE DOING BETTER?



CUZ OF THE SMOKES? NO, MAN.
THEY JUST GO HAND-IN-HAND
WITH WHAT I'VE DECIDED.



DECIDED WHAT?



THAT I'M NEVER
GONNA LEAVE THIS
PLACE.



WHY DO YOU SAY
THAT?



EVERY TIME I'D THINK OF WHAT
I WAS GONNA DO WHEN I GOT
HOME, I'D START TO GET SCARED
OF WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF I NEVER
GOT THERE. I'D THINK OF DYING
WAY OUT HERE AND IT'D REALLY
MESS WITH ME.



BUT THEN I DECIDED THAT THIS
PLACE HERE... THIS IS IT. ITS MY
LAST HOME WHERE I'M GONNA SPEND
THE REST OF MY LIFE. I'M GONNA
DIE HERE, KEDGE, AND NOW IT DOESNT
SEEM SO BAD ANYMORE. NEVER SMOKED
A DAY IN MY LIFE BECAUSE I WAS AFRAID
OF CANCER. LITTLE LATE FOR
THAT NOW.



I THINK I
UNDERSTAND.



RIGHT...



NO, REALLY, I DO.



HEH. THANKS, KEDGE.
I'LL SEE YA TOMORROW
BUDDY.





DOC...



SCARED. I'M REALLY SCARED...



I'M SORRY, SHED. THERE'S NOTHING I CAN DO FOR YOU ANYMORE EXCEPT TRY TO MAKE YOU COMFORTABLE.



I'M SO SORRY. I TRIED EVERYTHING. I-- IS THERE ANYTHING I CAN DO FOR YOU NOW?



ARE YOU A MORMON TOO?



CATHOLIC, IF THAT WON'T BE A PROBLEM, SHED. WHAT CAN I DO?



....PRAY FOR ME?



OF COURSE.



DEAR LORD, IF IT IS YOUR WILL TO TAKE THIS CHILD INTO YOUR CARE, PLEASE WELCOME HER THROUGH YOUR GATES WITHOUT SIN OR REGRET. WE WISH ONLY THAT YOUR WILL IS DONE BUT ASK FOR A PAINLESS VOYAGE INTO YOUR LOVING ARMS.

AMEN.





KEDGE?

SHED JUST WENT.

~SIGH~ I WISH I HAD THE ENERGY TO CRY...

YEAH.

KEDGE, WOULD YOU COME WITH ME FOR A SEC?

I HAD A BOYFRIEND AT HOME. HE HAD JUST GOTTEN HIS DRAFT NOTICE AS I WAS LEAVING. I HAVEN'T HEARD FROM HIM SINCE.

WHEN THE GRENADE WENT OFF AND I FOUND MYSELF STILL ALIVE, I REALIZED I WASN'T GOING TO GET ANOTHER SECOND CHANCE.

I'VE BEEN KEEPING AN EYE ON EVERYONE AND THERE'S SOMETHING I HAVE TO TELL YOU.

MOST OF THE SF GUYS ARE GOING AROUND TREATING ALL OF THIS AS JUST A DAY AT THE OFFICE. SOMETHING THEY'RE USED TO DEALING WITH, JOKING AROUND, HAVING A GREAT TIME.

THYT HASN'T BEEN SLEEPING. IN THE DAY, HE'S ALL RIGHT, BUT AT NIGHT HE JUST SITS UP STARING INTO SPACE.

TAYKE SPENDS ALL OF HIS FREE TIME IN THE CELLAR WRITING MUSIC CONSTANTLY



HUNDRED FOLD AND ZON ARE... HUNDREDFOLD HAS BEEN GOING INTO THE WOODS, GAGGING HIMSELF AND SCREAMING. ZON HAS TAKEN UP SPARRING WITH A BRICK WALL



IT SEEMS THAT THEY ARE ALL READY TO DIE OR AT LEAST GETTING THERE.



I KNOW, BUT THERE ARE THE OTHERS.



THAIRFOR SEEMS TO HAVE TAKEN ON A DEN MOTHER ROLE AND SHE SEEMS SWEET ENOUGH.



I HAD SEEN EAVEN AND CONFORD SNEAKING AROUND BEFORE, BUT LATELY THEY'VE BEEN PRETTY OPEN ABOUT WHAT'S GOING ON.



AND I NEVER THOUGHT JAPANATHA WOULD FALL IN LOVE BUT SHE SEEMS TO HAVE FALLEN HARD FOR THAT GUY, OYN.



EVEN SGT. AYI HAS TAKEN A LIKING TO THAT SF WOMAN, THA



THEY'RE NOT GETTING READY TO DIE, THEY'RE DOING THEIR BEST TO LIVE! ...AND I WANT TO LIVE TOO.



WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE WITH ME TONIGHT...?



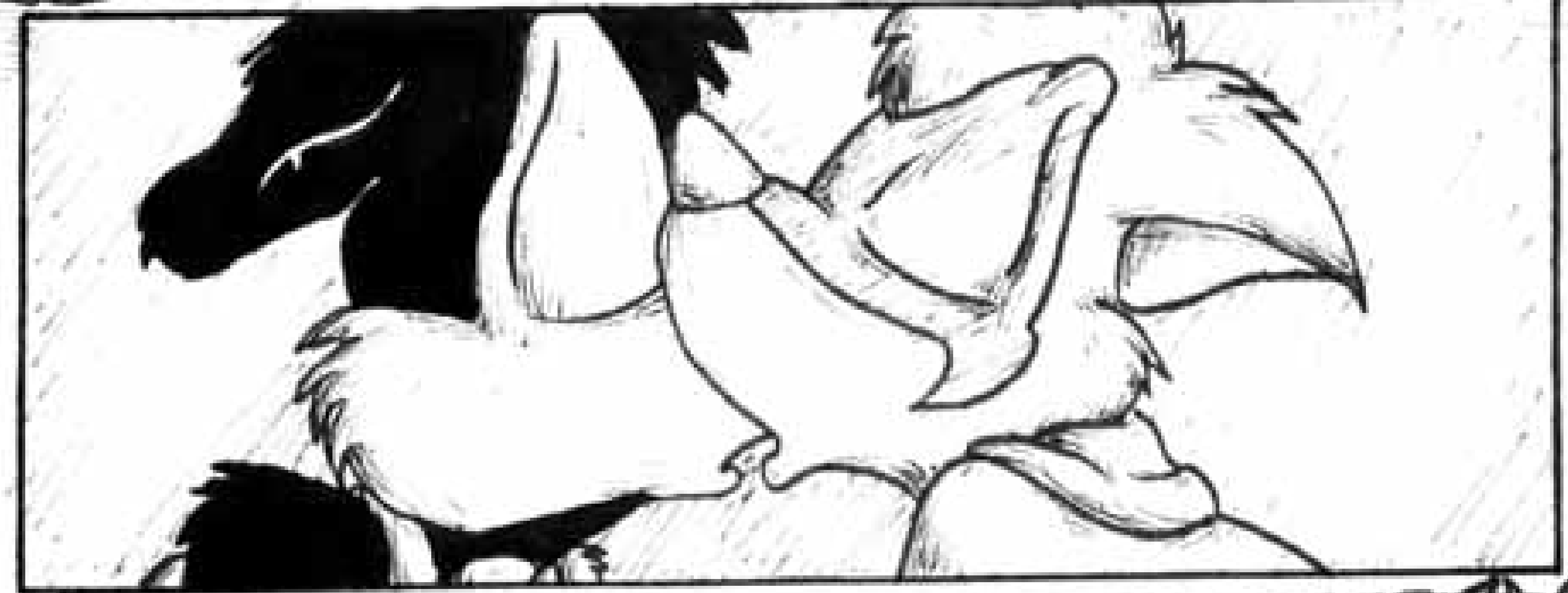
I... UHM... SURE!



LET'S GO TO THE BASEMENT.
LESS TRAFFIC THERE.



OKAY.



SORRY, KIDS. JUST GETTIN'
SOME STUFF FOR DINNER.



CARRY ON,
TROOPERS.



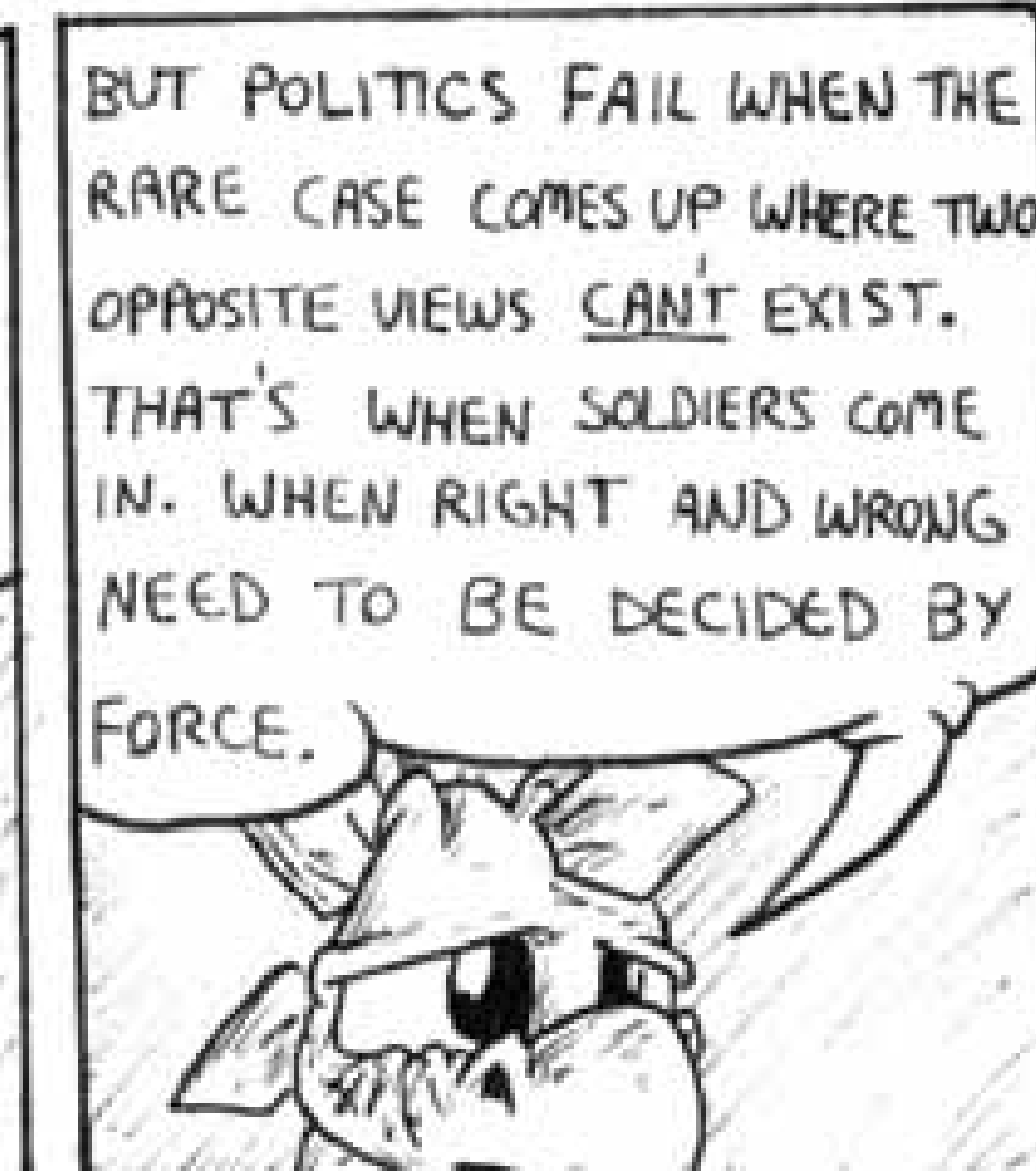
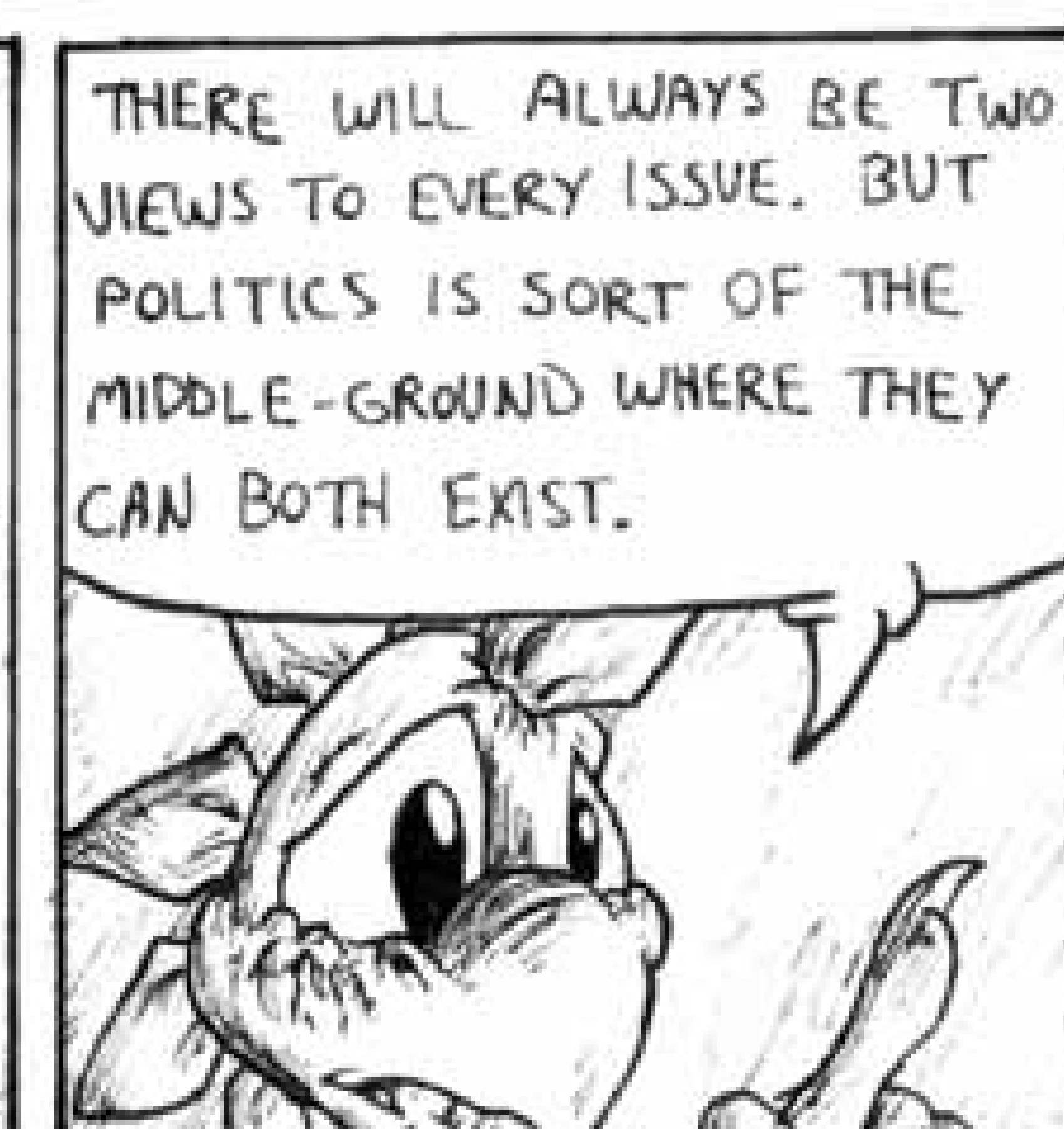
COME FIND
ME LATER AND
I'LL FEED YOU.



HEY ELL-TEE! AH'LL BE RIGH' BACK. GOONA GO
TO TH'BASEMENT AND GET MANSELF SOME--

YOU STAY RIGHT HERE,
WAZ, AND HELP MAKE DINNER.
THAT'S AN ORDER.





AN ARMY IS A TOOL USED TO EXERT POLITICAL FORCE. A SOLDIER'S JOB IS NOT REALLY ABOUT FIGHTING WARS, ITS MORE ABOUT ENDING THEM AS QUICK AS POSSIBLE WITH THE LEAST AMOUNT OF LIFE LOST.



RIGHT. THOUGH I KIND OF WISH WE DIDN'T HAVE TO RESORT TO FIGHTING



TRUE. NO GOOD SOLDIER PRAYS FOR WAR. TERRIBLE THINGS HAPPEN....



HEH...



WHAT'S FUNNY, BULL?



I WAS JUST THINKING ABOUT A FRIEND AND FELLOW SOLDIER. I HAD TO BREAK HIS DEATH TO HIS FAMILY. TOLD THEM THAT HE DIED A HERO AFTER HE PULLED ME AND SEVERAL OTHER WOUNDED MEN OUT OF A FIRE CAUSED BY AN EXPLOSION.



I COULDN'T TELL THEM WHAT REALLY HAPPENED WITH A STRAIGHT FACE BECAUSE THE TRUTH WAS THAT THE POOR SONUVA BITCH ACCIDENTALLY TOOK A SHIT ON A LAND MINE! HA!



IT WAS ONE OF THOSE MINES MEANT TO TAKE OUT A TANK, TOO, SO HE WAS EVERYWHERE! RUINED MY UNIFORM TOO ON HIS WAY OUT, THAT ASSHAT!

HAHAHAHAHA!



AND THAT'S FUNNY??

DARLING, YOU HAVE TO UNDERSTAND THAT I WAS THERE. EVERY TIME I THINK OF HIM, I ALSO HAVE TO THINK OF HIM BLOWING TO PIECES.

IT'S SO VIVID IN MY HEAD, EVEN TO THIS DAY. I COULD COUNT THE BITS AS THEY FLEW PAST MY HEAD AND SCATTERED. I EVEN REMEMBER SEEING ONE IN PARTICULAR COOK IN MID-AIR FROM THE BLAST

HE NEVER EVEN KNEW WHAT HIT HIM. HE WAS STILL GRINNING FROM A JOKE I'D TOLD HIM WHEN HE BLEW UP.

AND THE ONLY THING I COULD THINK TO SAY WHEN THE SMOKE CLEARED WAS "DAMN, BERNIE. THAT MUST HAVE BEEN A HELL OF A DUMP"

I KNOW THAT AS A SOLDIER, I'M SUPPOSED TO BE PROFESSIONAL ABOUT WHAT I DO, BUT I'VE SEEN SO MANY THINGS OVER THE YEARS THAT MAKE IT HARD FOR ME TO SLEEP AT NIGHT.

YOU SEE, IF I DON'T LEARN TO LAUGH AT THINGS LIKE THIS, I'LL GO CRAZY.



ONE WEEK LATER



WE REALLY SHOULDN'T HAVE
FOOLED AROUND LAST NIGHT

WHY NOT? WAZ WAS
KEEPING AN EYE
OUT.



WAZ WAS WATCHING US
MORE THAN THE SCENERY.



HMM...?
WHAT'S THAT?



THAT..... THAT'S WHAT
WE'RE WATCHING FOR.
WAKE THE CAPTAIN.

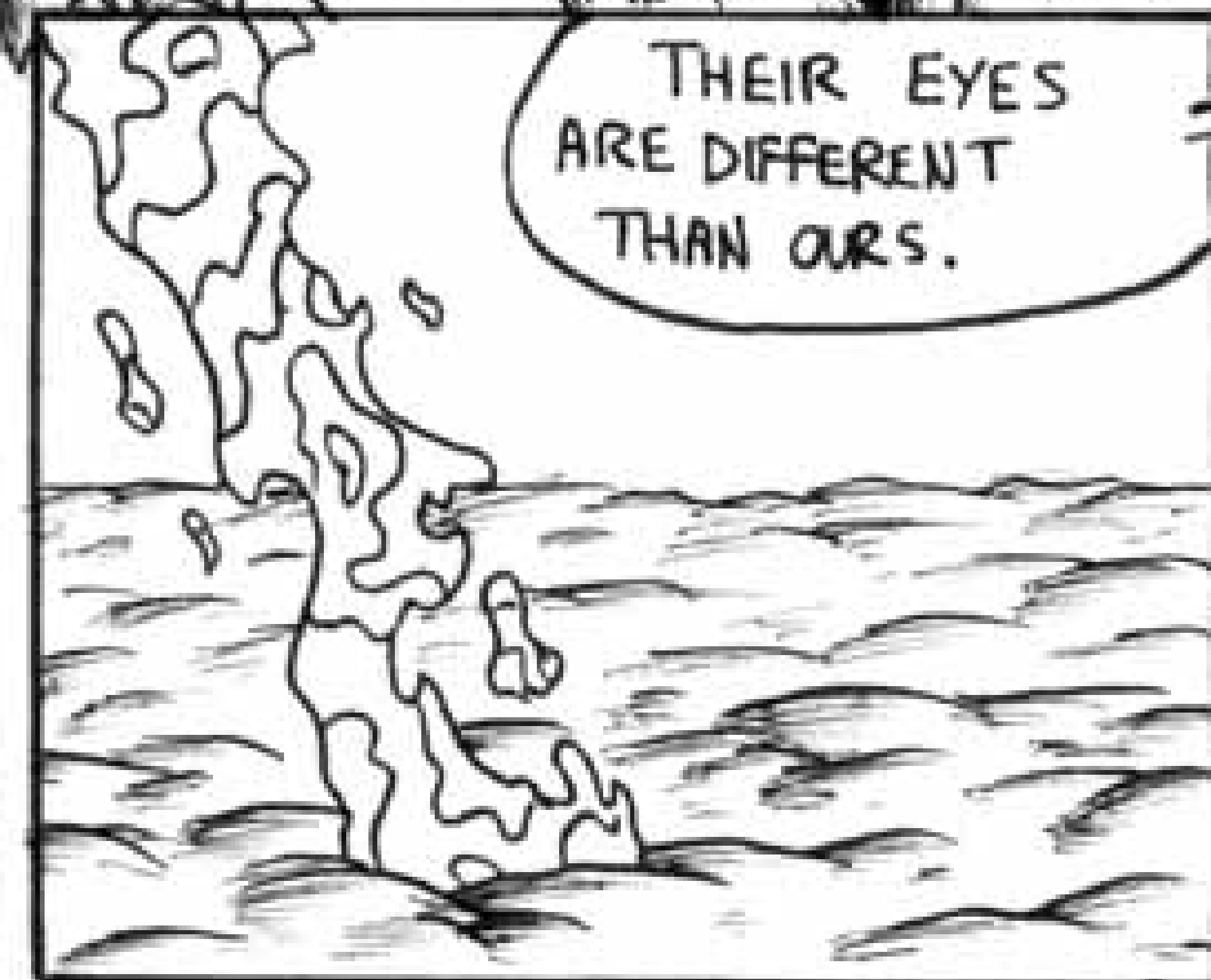




THEIR EYES
ARE DIFFERENT
THAN OURS.

WHATEVER FUEL THEIR
TANKS RUN ON, THEY
SOMEHOW CAN'T SEE THE
EXHAUST TRAIL

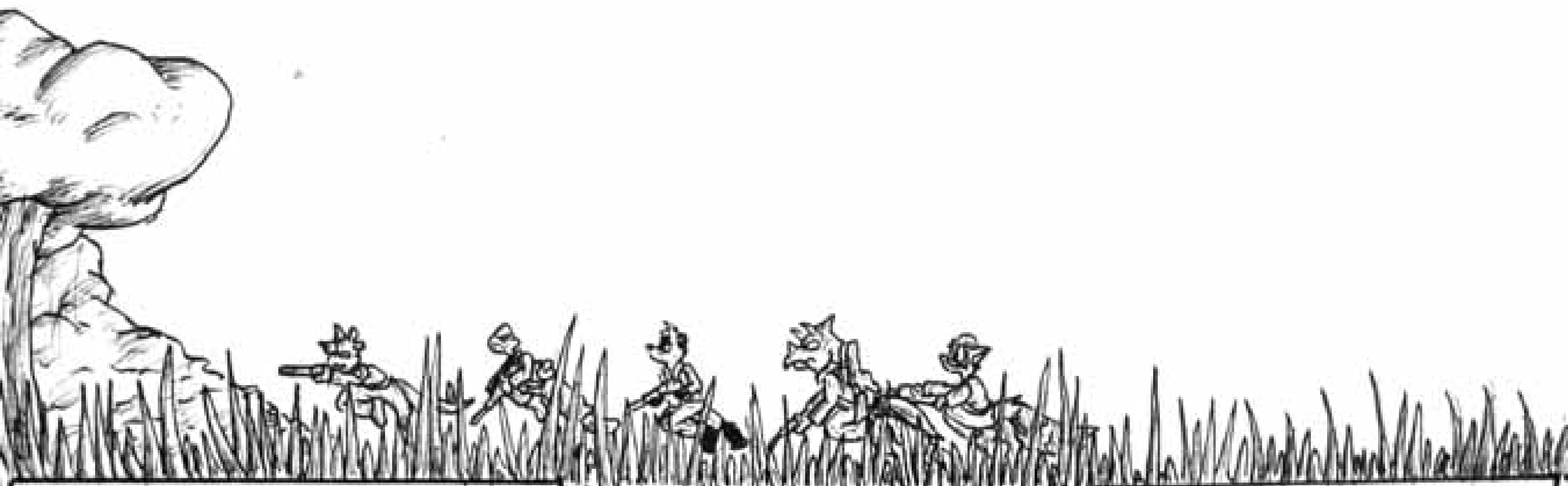
ITS PART O'THE REASON
WE'VE BEEN DOIN' BETTER
ON TH'GROUND IN THIS
WAR THAN IN SPACE.



THAIRFOR? GET THIS
PLACE READY TO EVACUATE
IF WE NEED TO.

WAYRE, OYN, SEID, AND KEDGE, COME WITH
ME. BRING THE RPG LAVNCHER





STUFF YOUR BAGS WITH FOOD AND
AND THEN GET ALL OF THE
EXPLOSIVES OUT HERE FOR USE.

WE'RE NOT TAKING THEM
WITH US?

THE EXPLOSIVES ARE FOR IF
WE NEED TO EVACUATE. I WANT
TO BOOBY TRAP THIS FORT AND
TAKE OUT AS MANY AS WE
CAN.





I COUNTED THIRTY OR
SO INFANTRY...

PLUS THAT
TANK.

LOOKS AS IF THEY'RE CHECKING OUT THE
ROAD OF RUBBLE. KINDA LAX. MOST OF 'EM DON'T
EVEN HAVE WEAPONS NEARBY

AND THAT ROAD LEADS
RIGHT TO OUR FORT.

THEY PROBABLY THINK
THEY'VE ALREADY WON AND
THE PLANET IS THEIRS. THAT'S
WHY THEY'RE NOT ALERT.

THEN MAYBE ITS TIME FOR A
WAKEUP CALL.

KEDGE, YOU SET UP HERE, OYN COME WITH ME AROUND THE BACK OF THE TANK. SEID AND WAYRE HEAD A LITTLE FURTHER DOWN THE ROAD...



SEID? GET HIGH UP AND AIM THE RPG AT THE GROUP CLEARING THE ROAD.



I'LL GET AN IED ON THE TANK'S FUEL CASING. WHEN IT BLOWS, SEID WILL FIRE INTO THE CROWD. EVERYONE ELSE OPEN FIRE WITH RIFLES AND GRENADES.

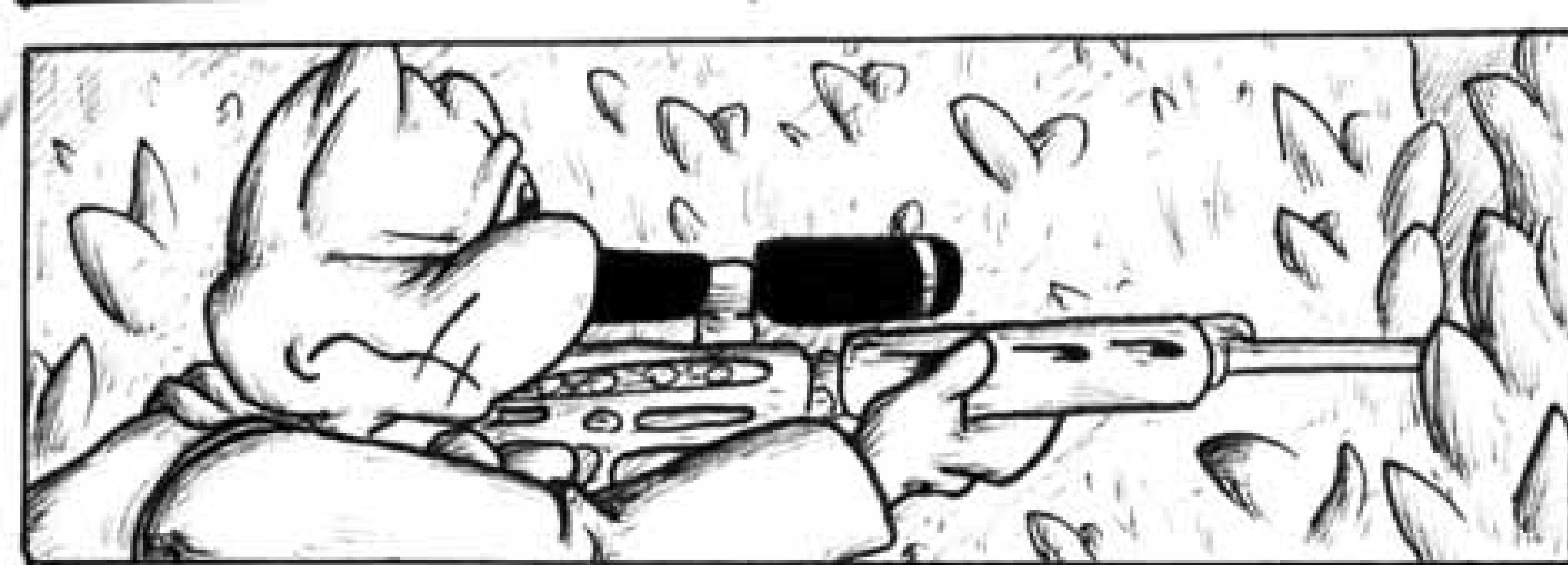
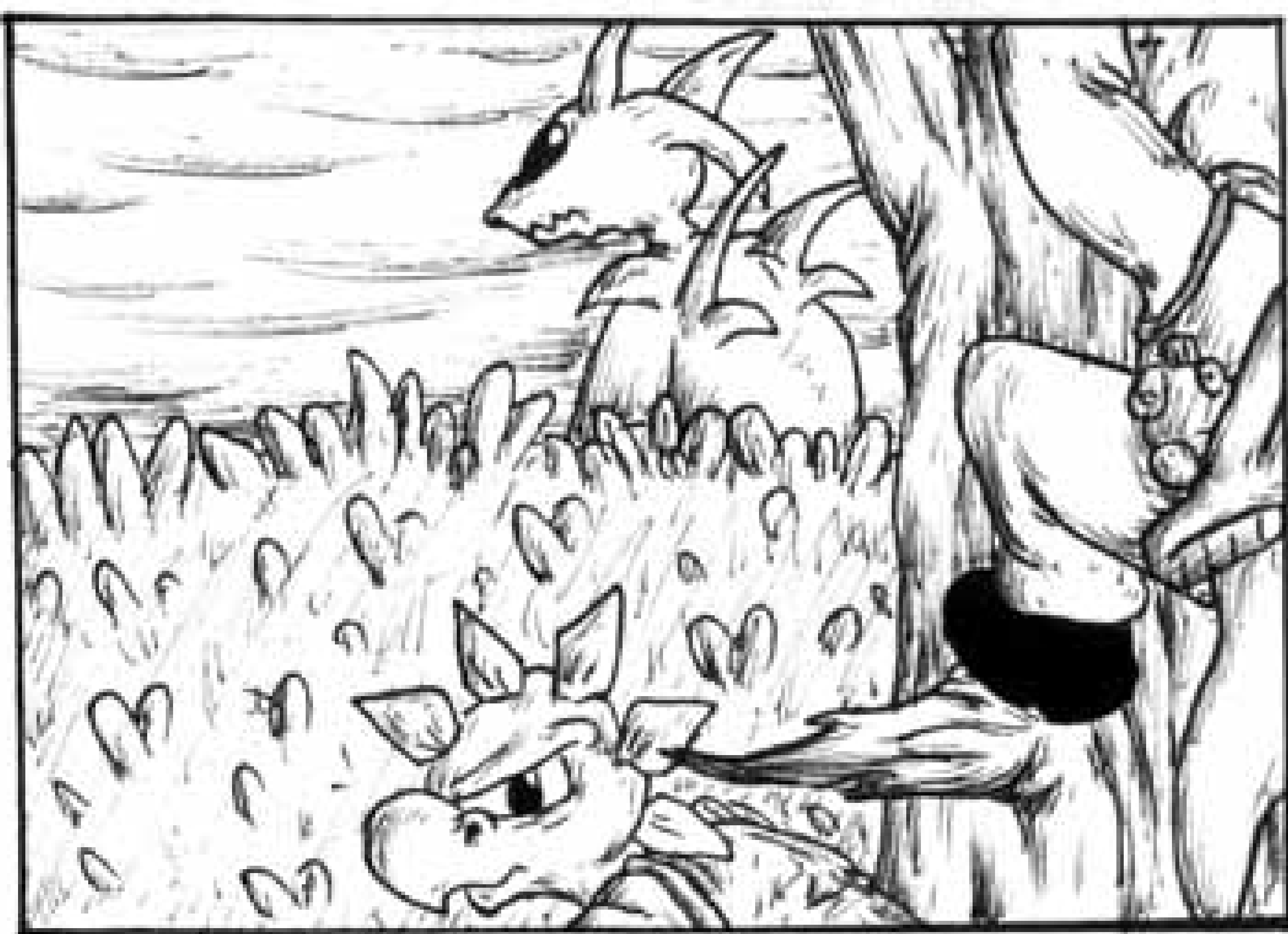
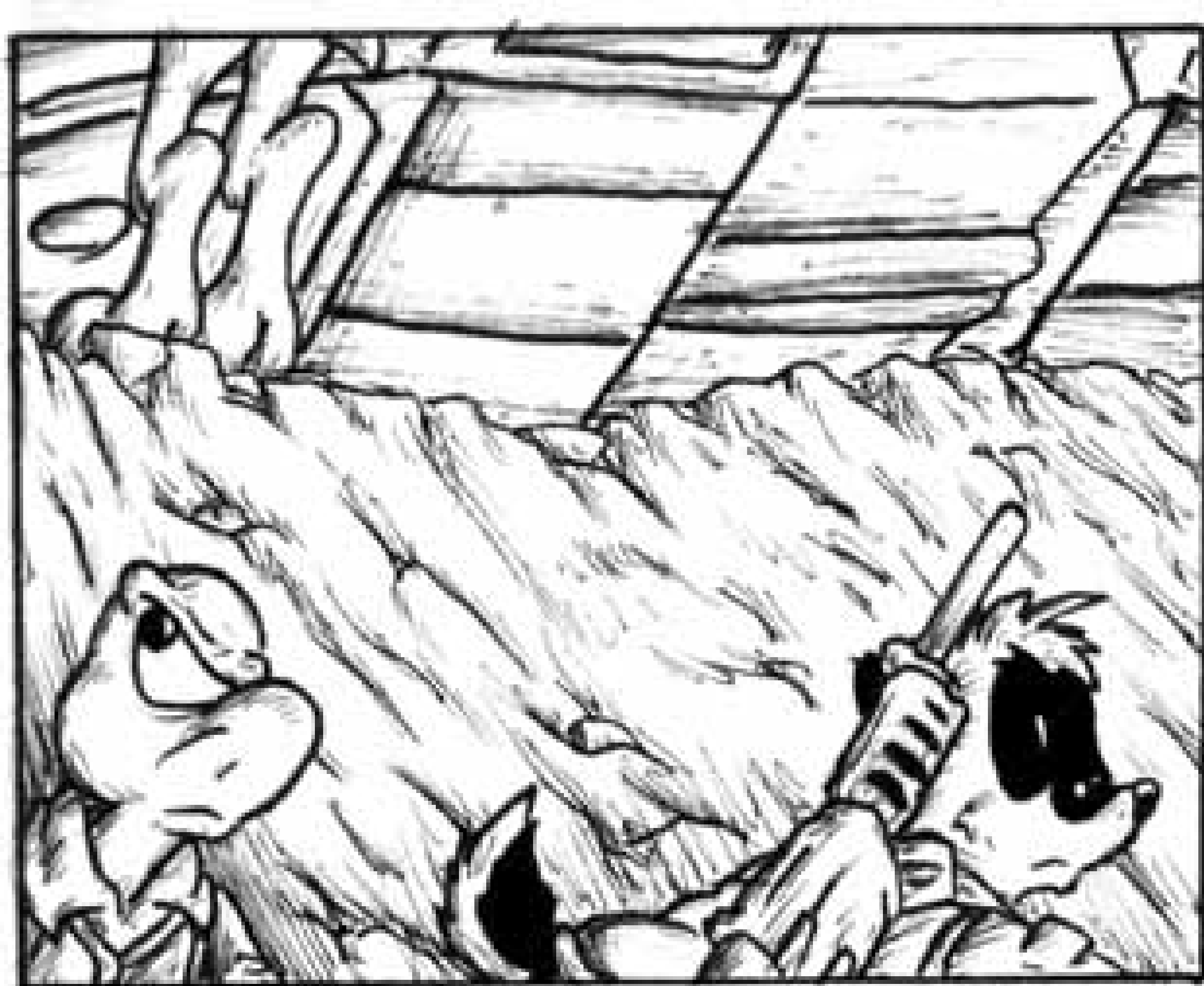


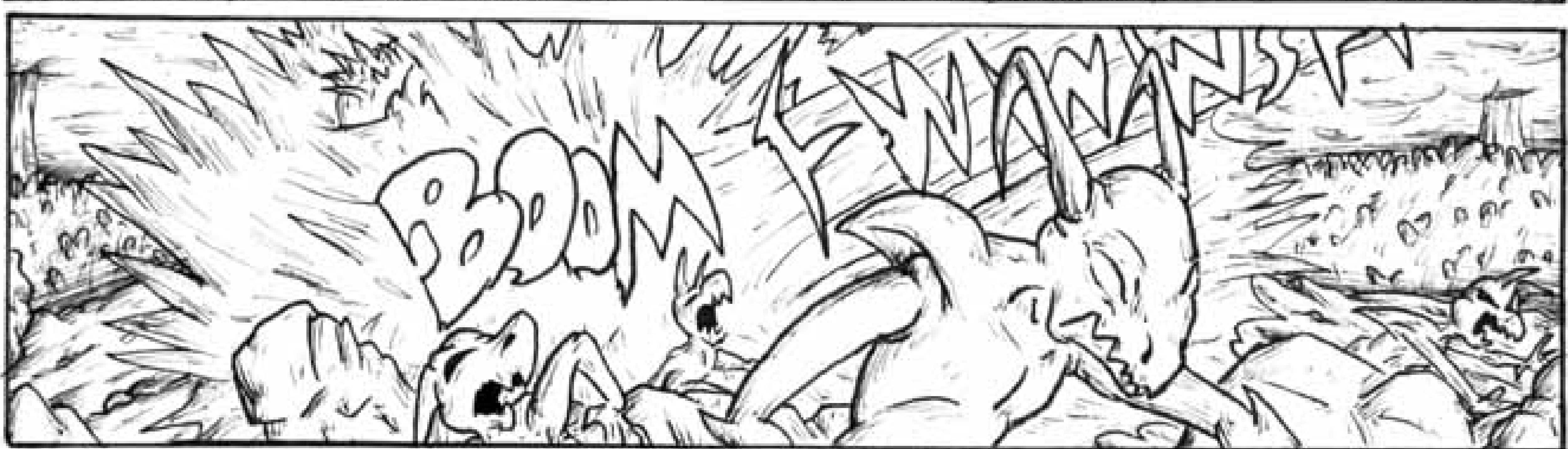
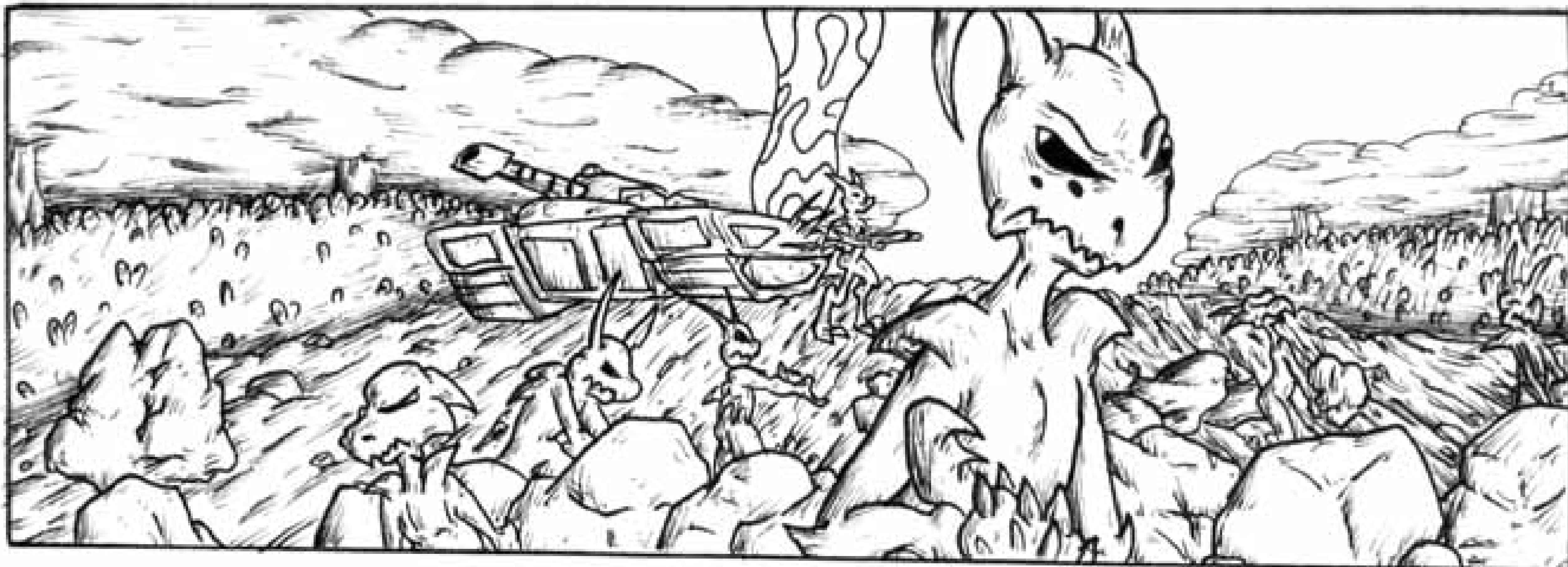
SEID, RELOAD THE RPG FAST IN CASE THE IED DOESN'T PENETRATE THE FUEL SHELL.



OKAY, LET'S MOVE OUT.

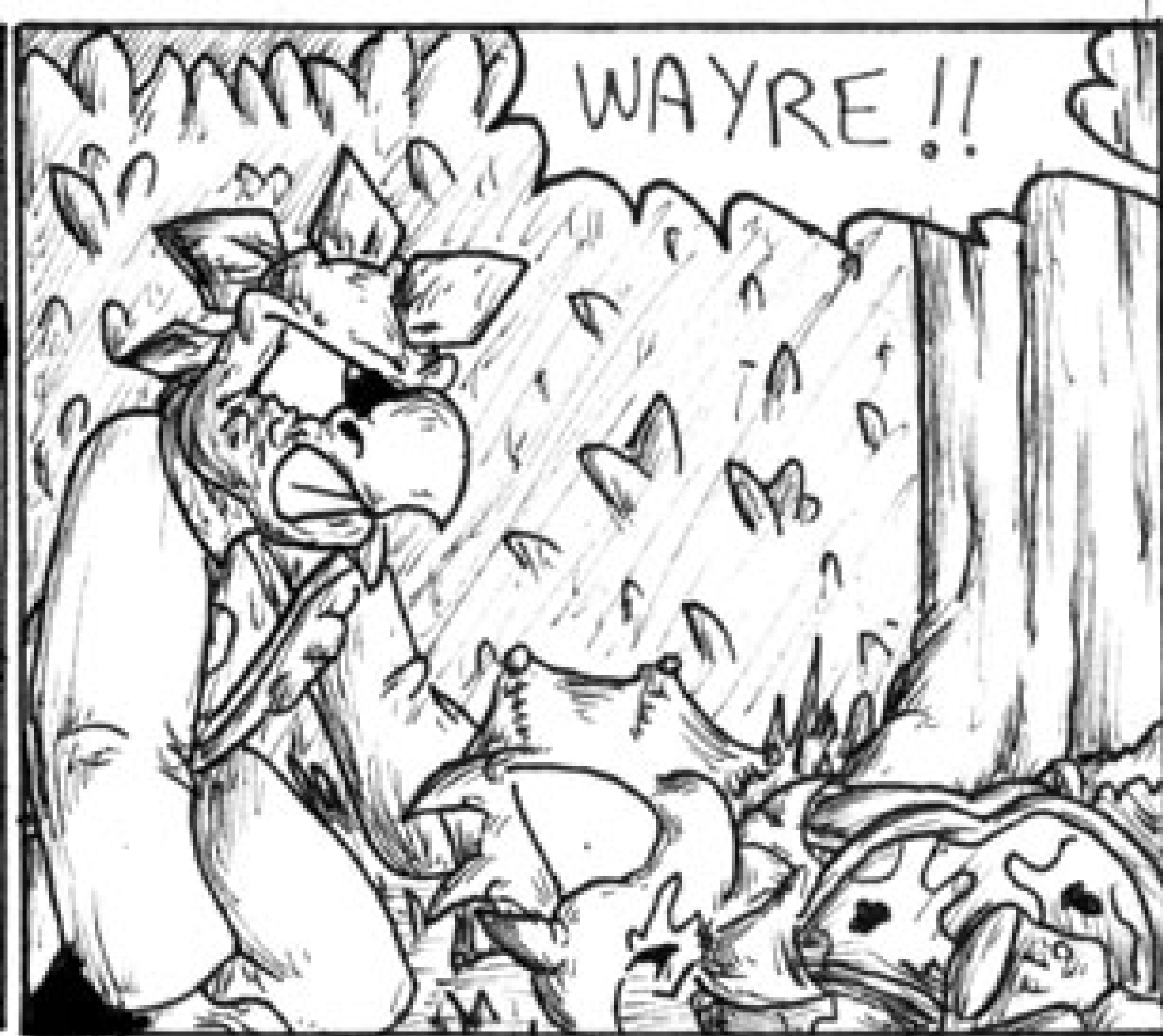
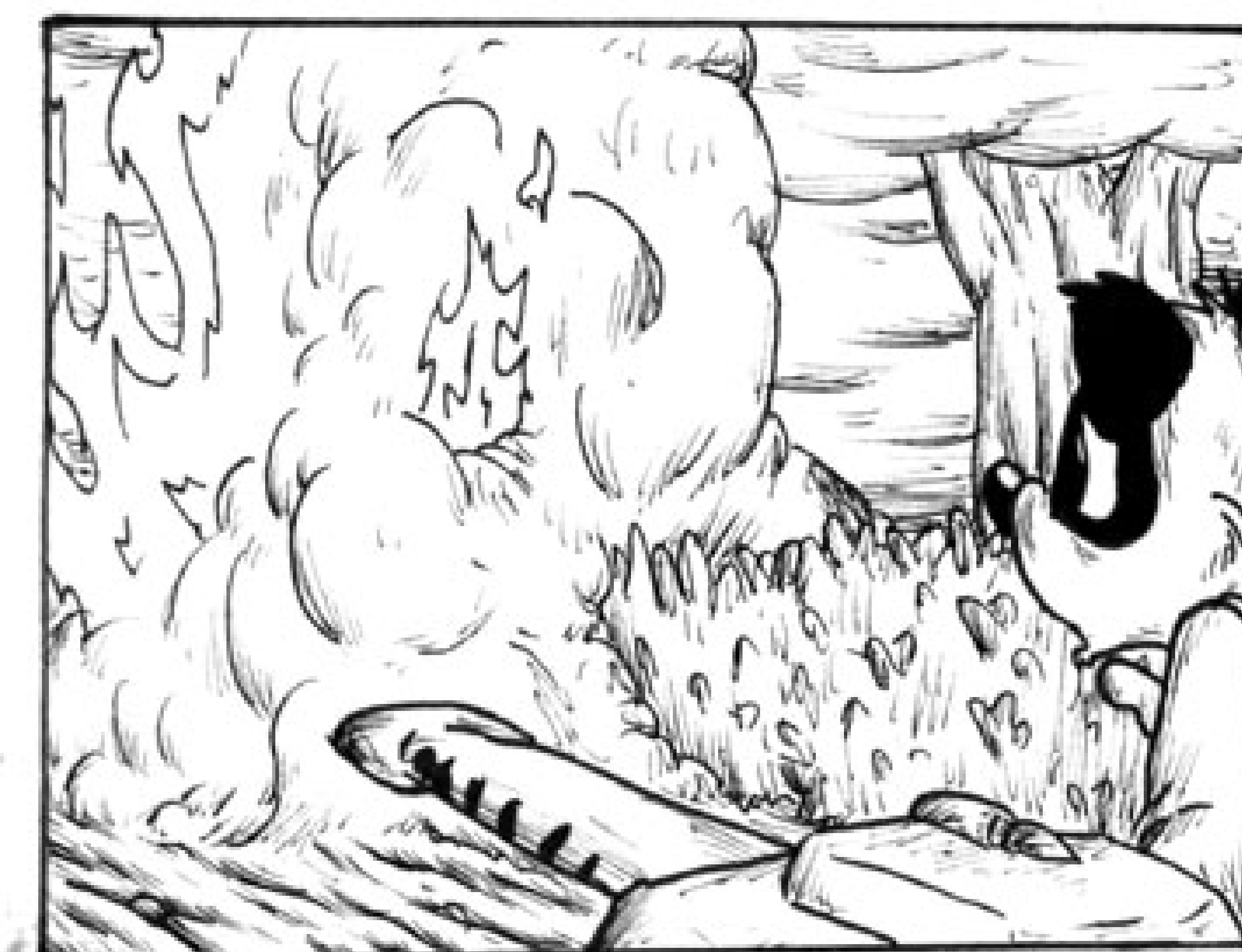


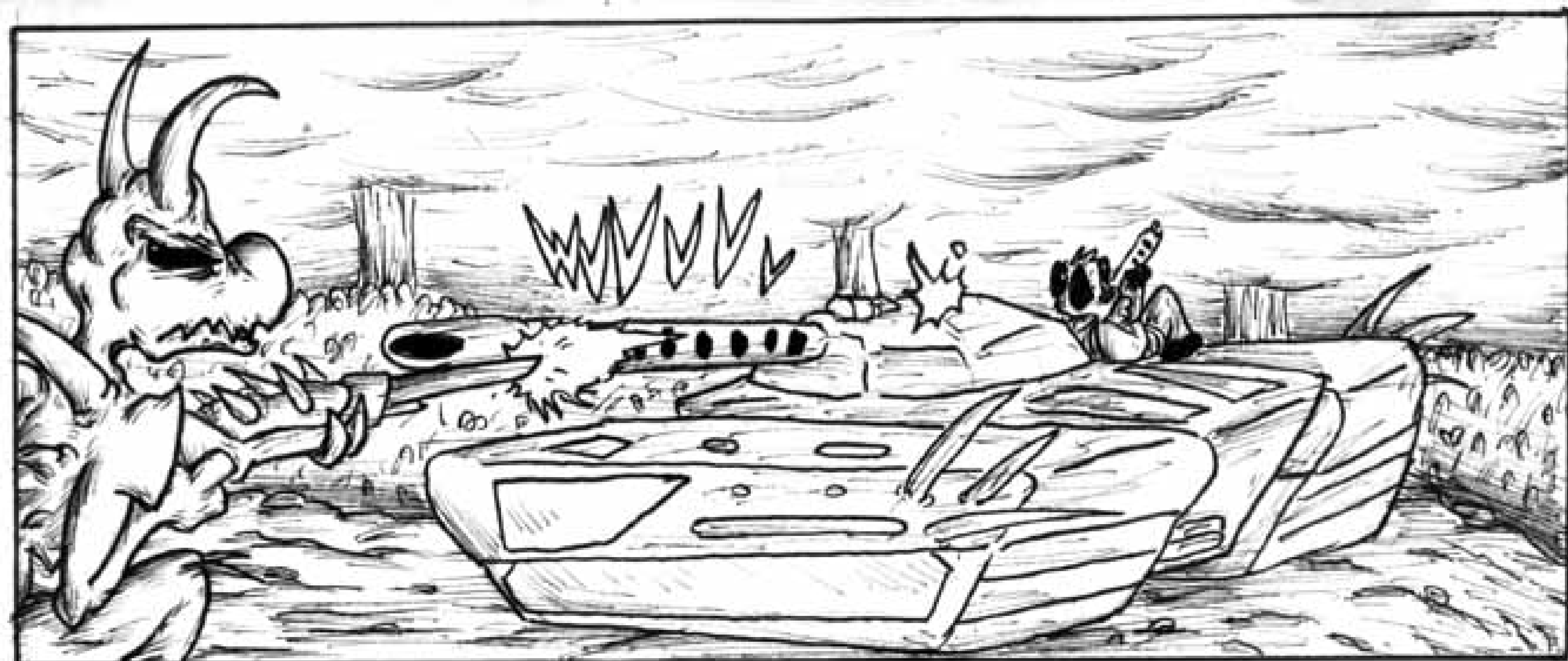




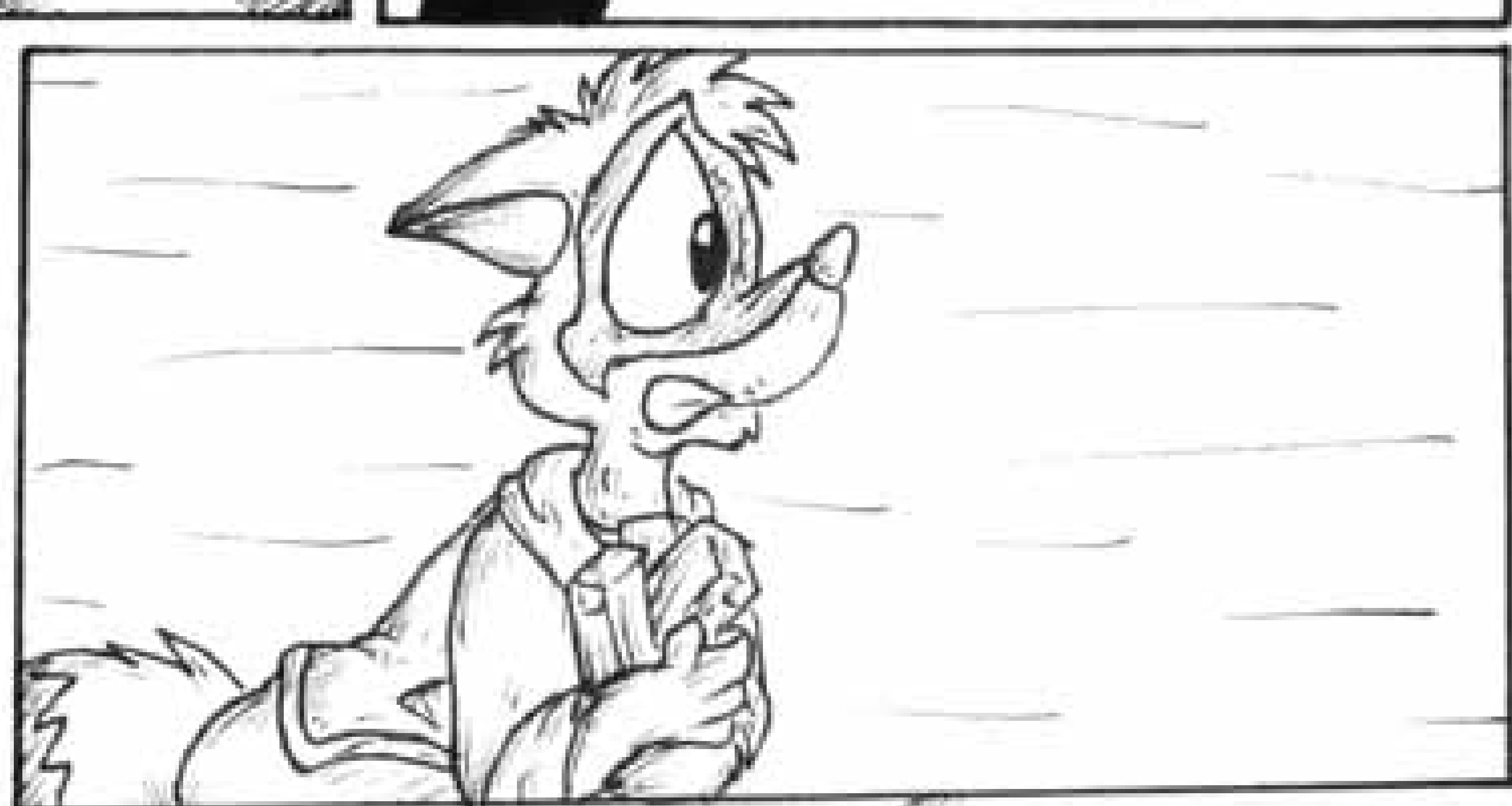
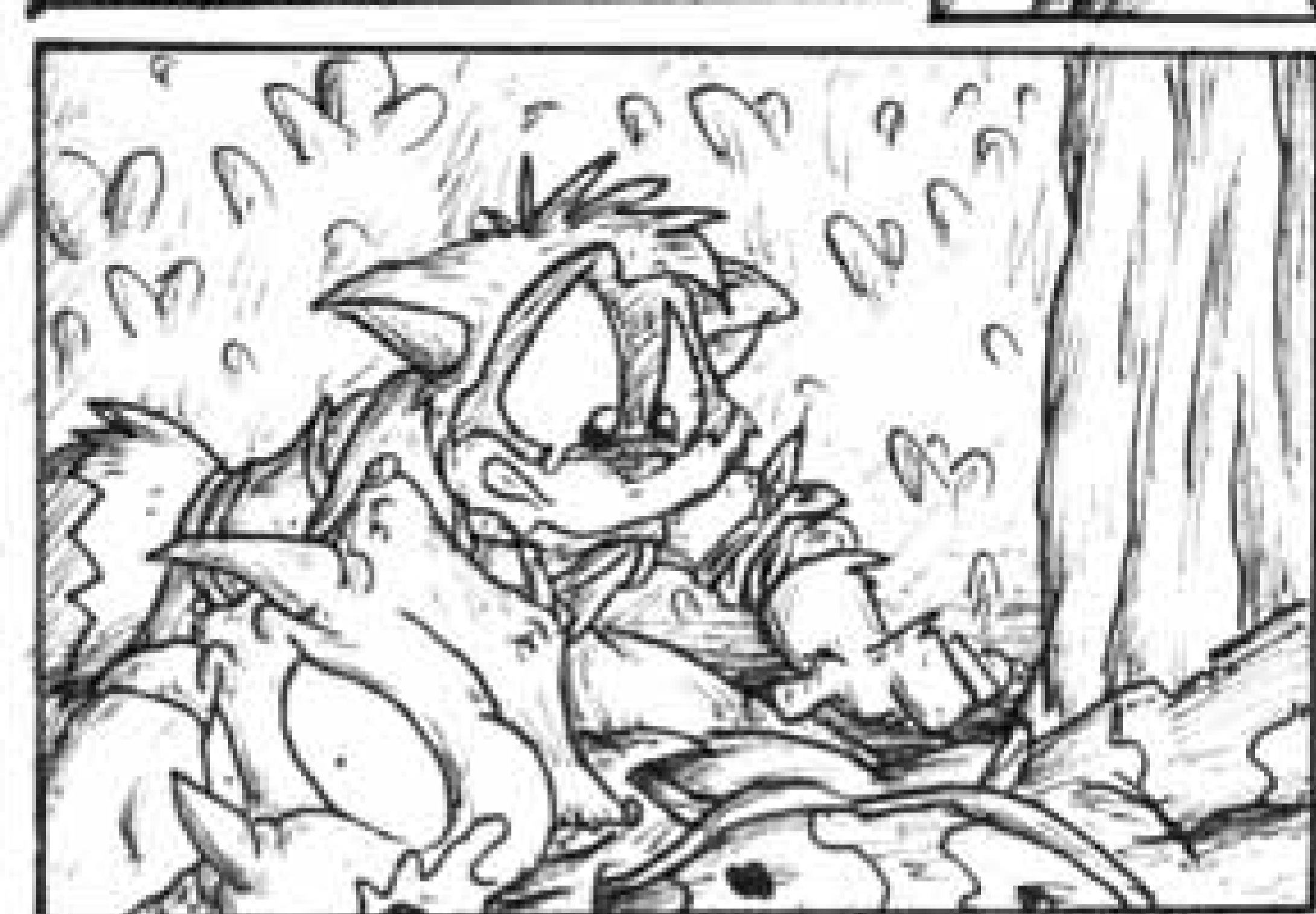


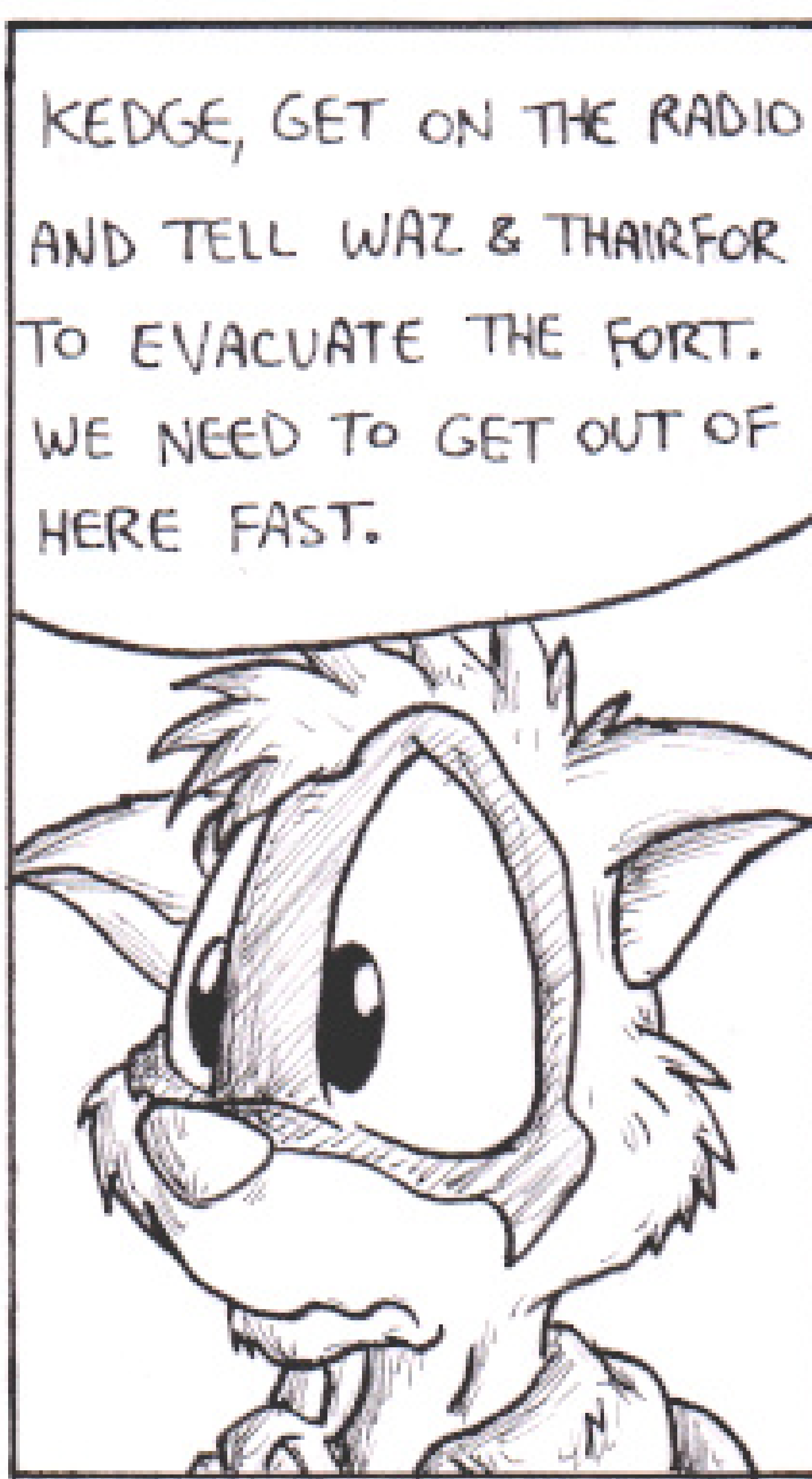
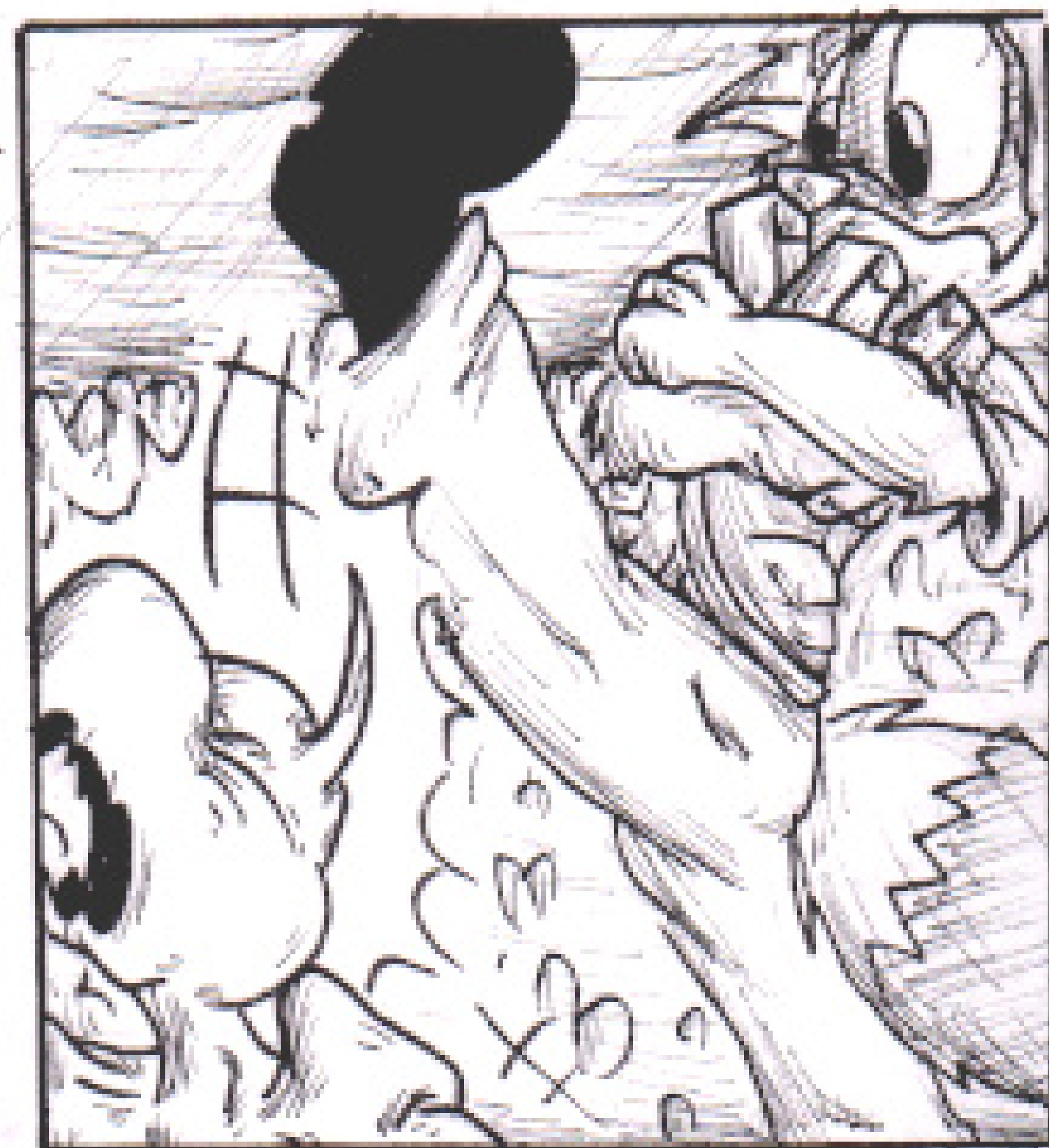


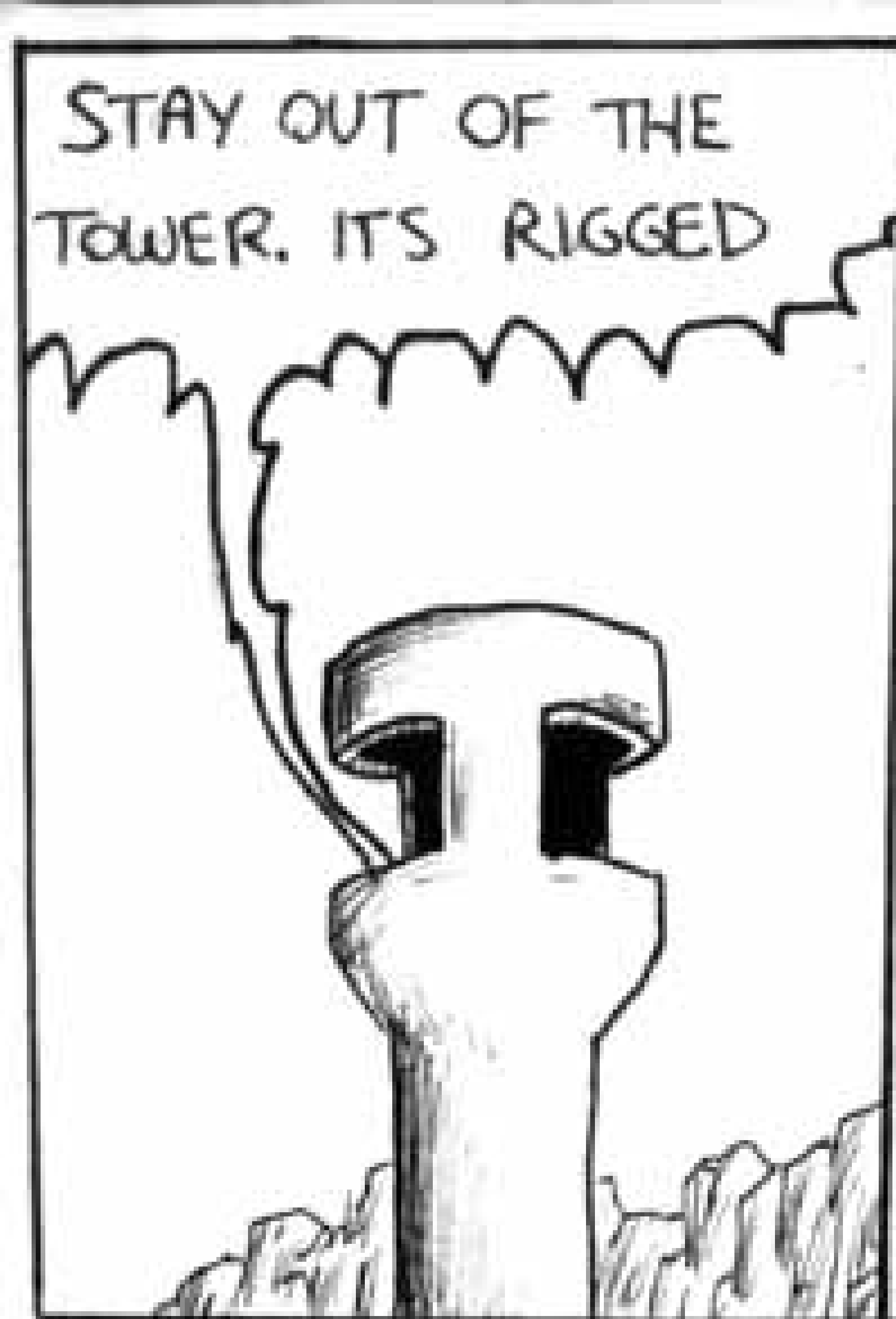








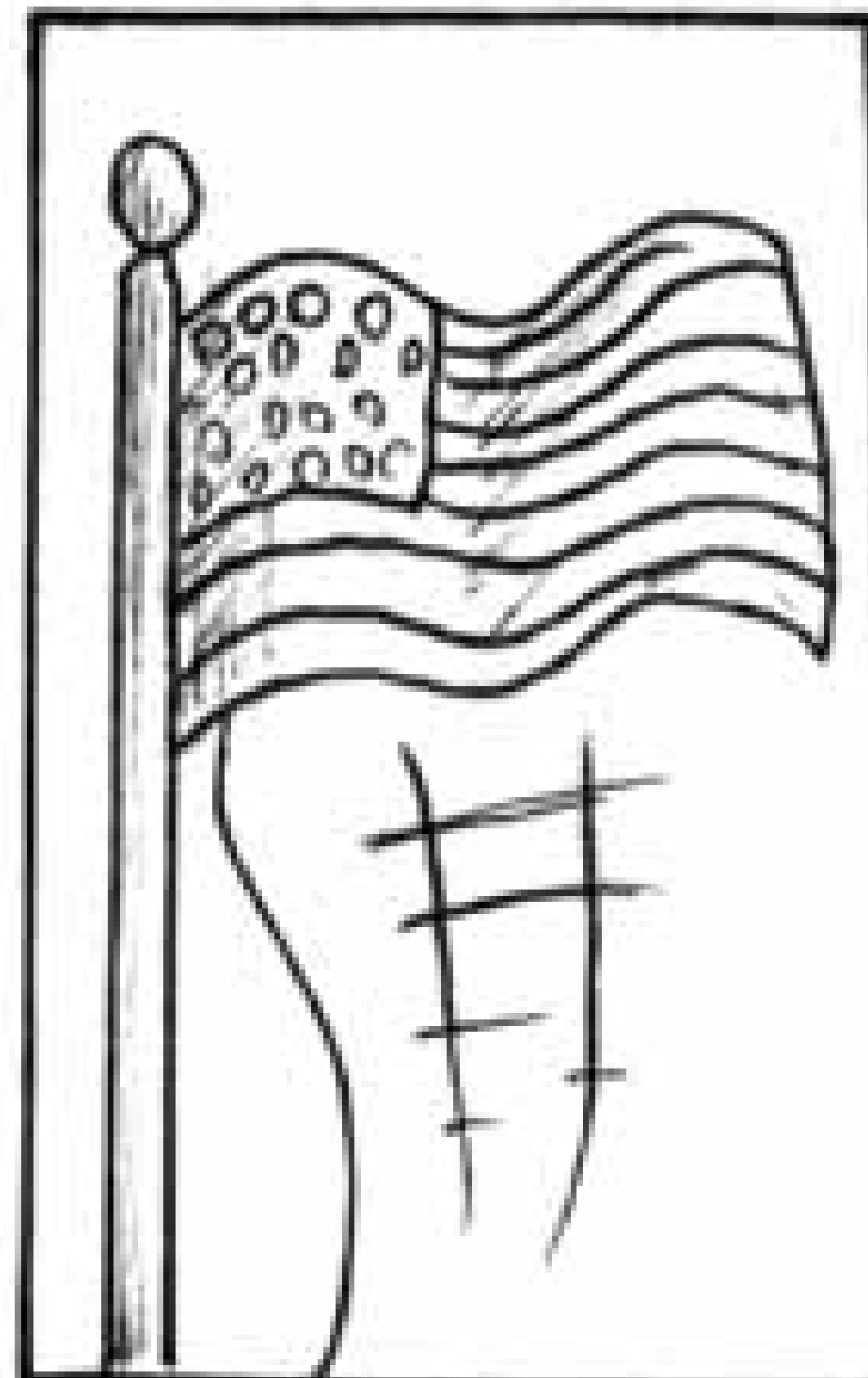
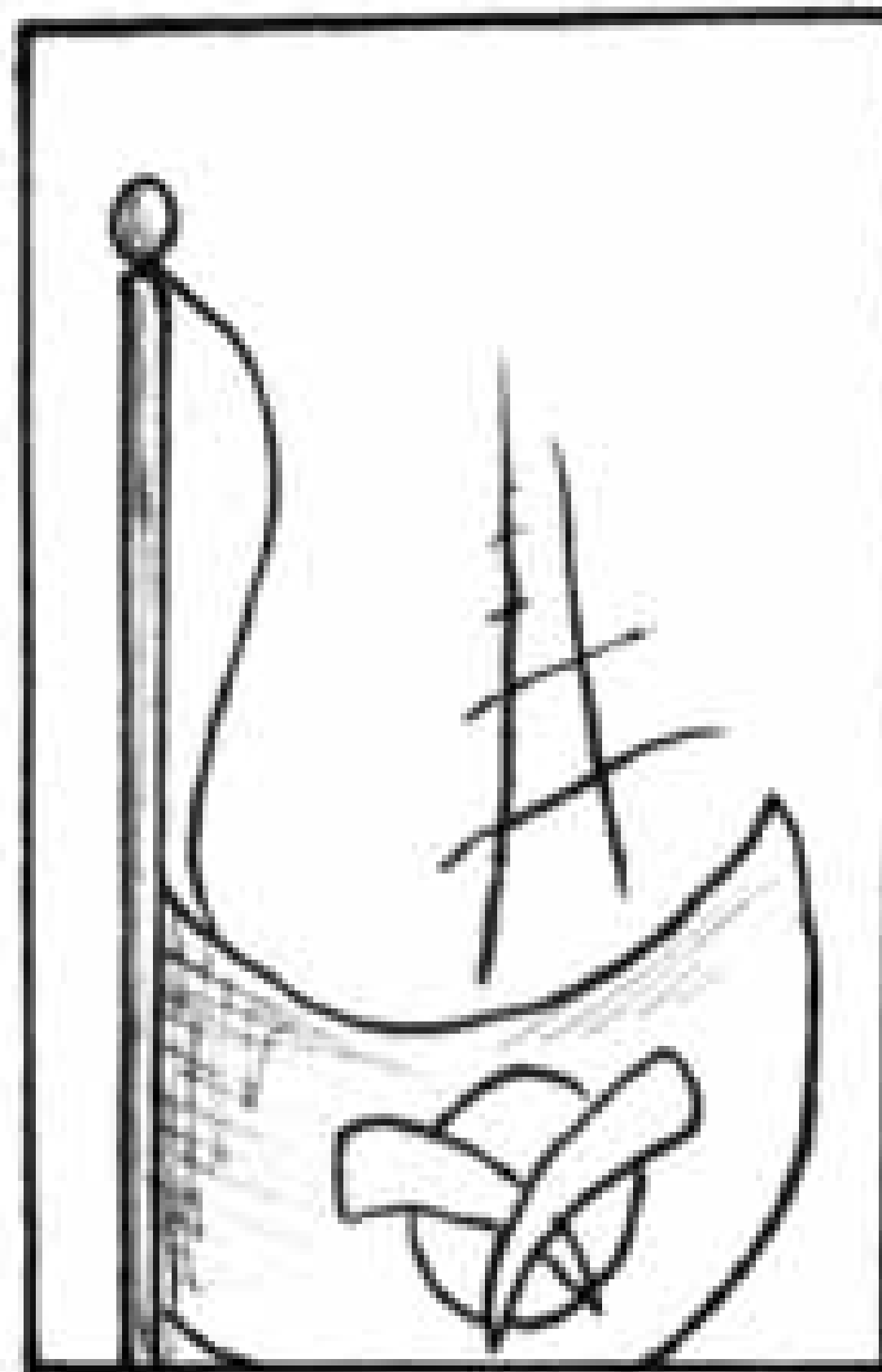
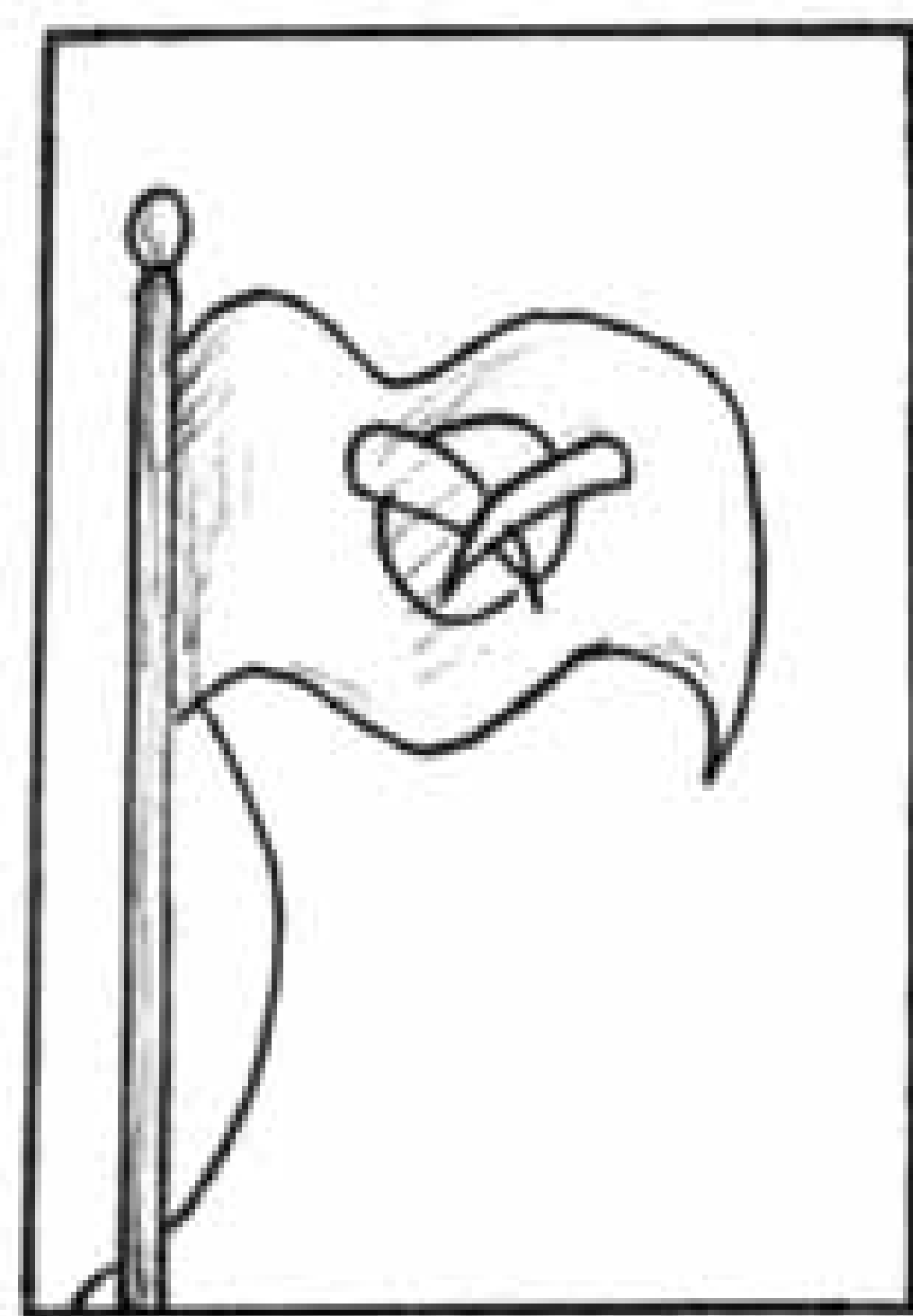




STAY OUT OF THE TOWER. IT'S RIGGED



DONE IN THE BASEMENT!



NOW WE CAN GO.



SGT. AYI? MY GROUP WILL STAY AND WAIT FOR THE CAPTAIN. GET YOUR MARINES OUT OF HERE. WE'LL MEET UP AT THE FALLBACK POINT.

GOTCHA.

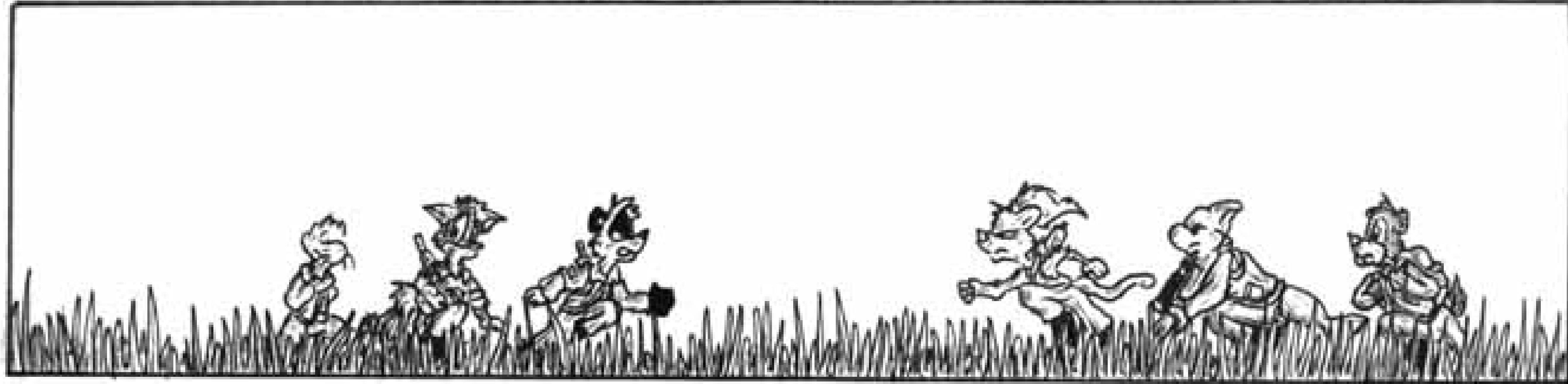


SGT. AYI? I'D LIKE TO STAY AND HELP IF I CAN.



ALL RIGHT. GOOD LUCK, SAH. MARINES! WE'RE MOVING OUT!





SIR, THE MARINES ARE ALREADY HEADED TO THE FALLBACK POINT.

GOOD. LET'S NOT GET TOO FAR BEHIND THEM.

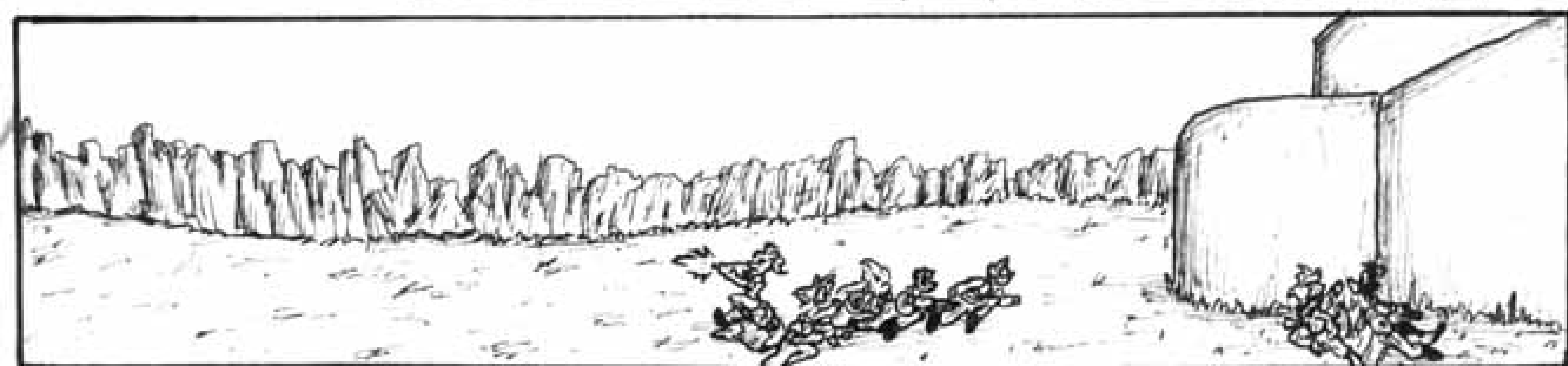
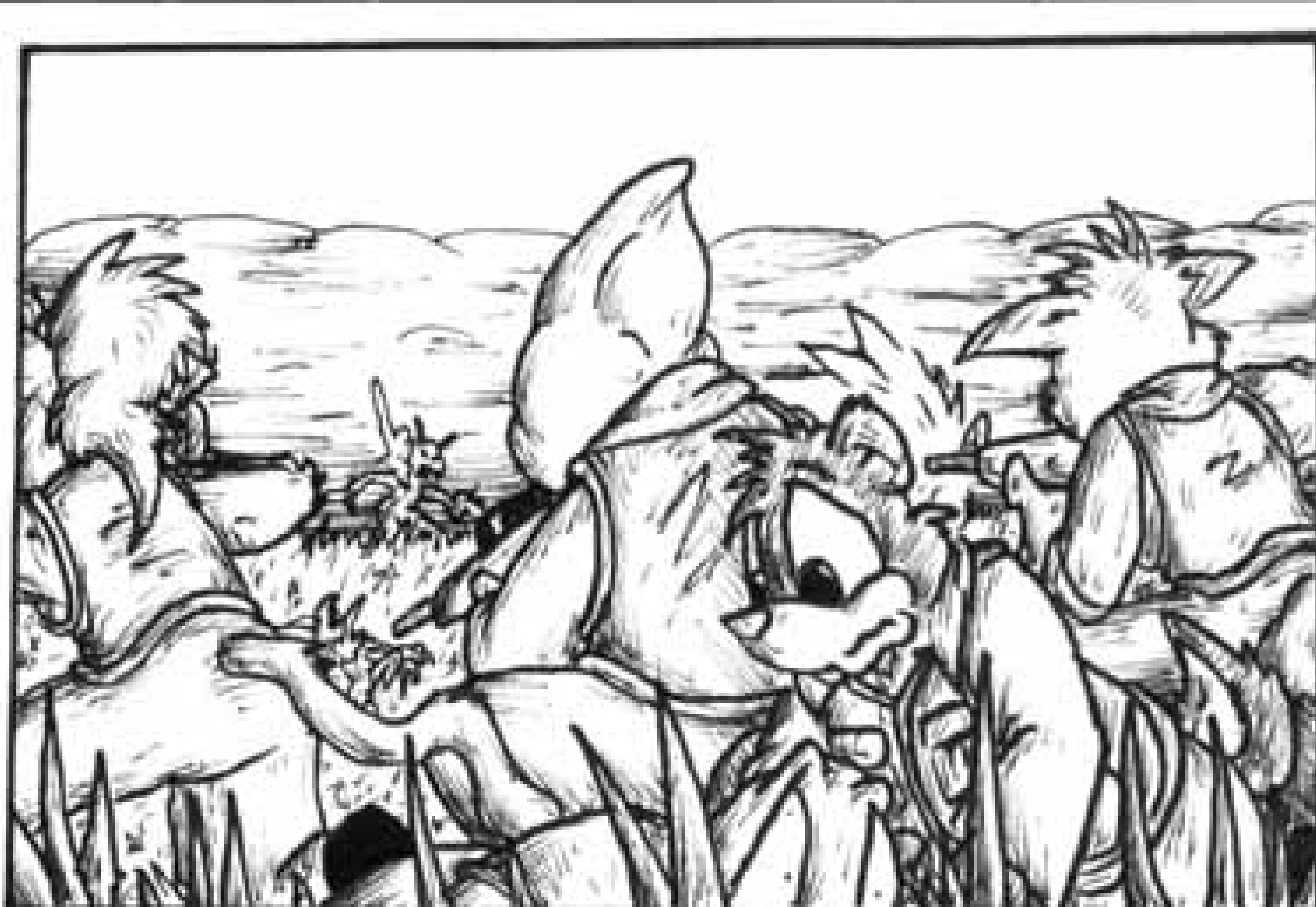
ERRR K K K K K K K

RUN.

K K K R R R

K R R R S W !



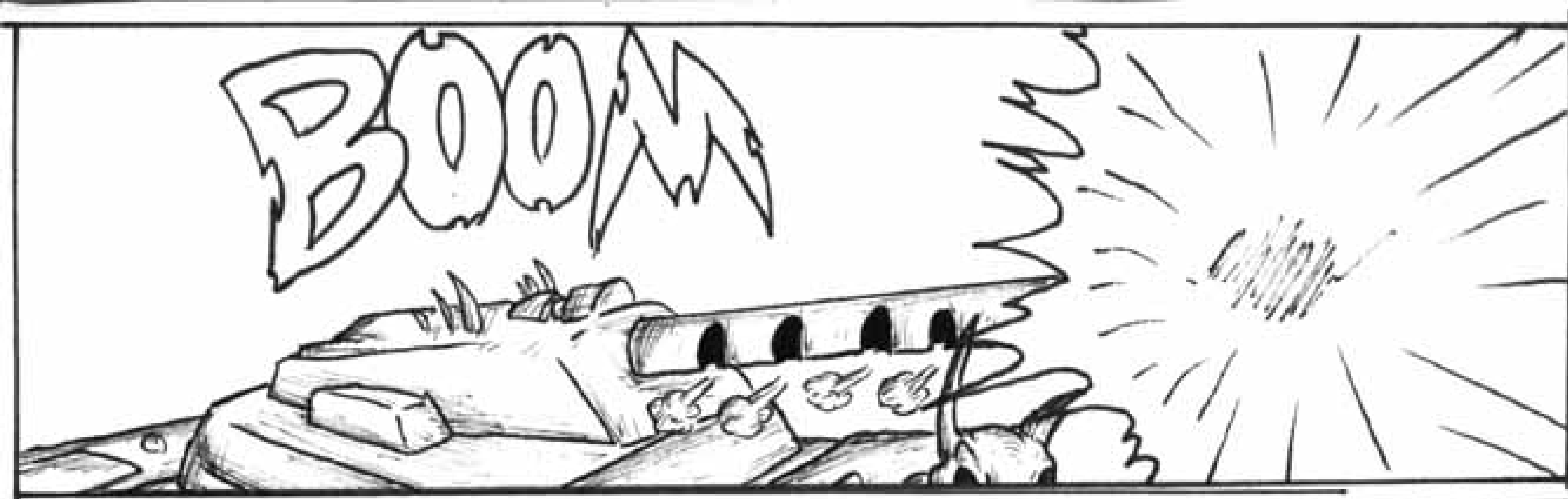








BOOM



AWW F—



BWASH



THA!

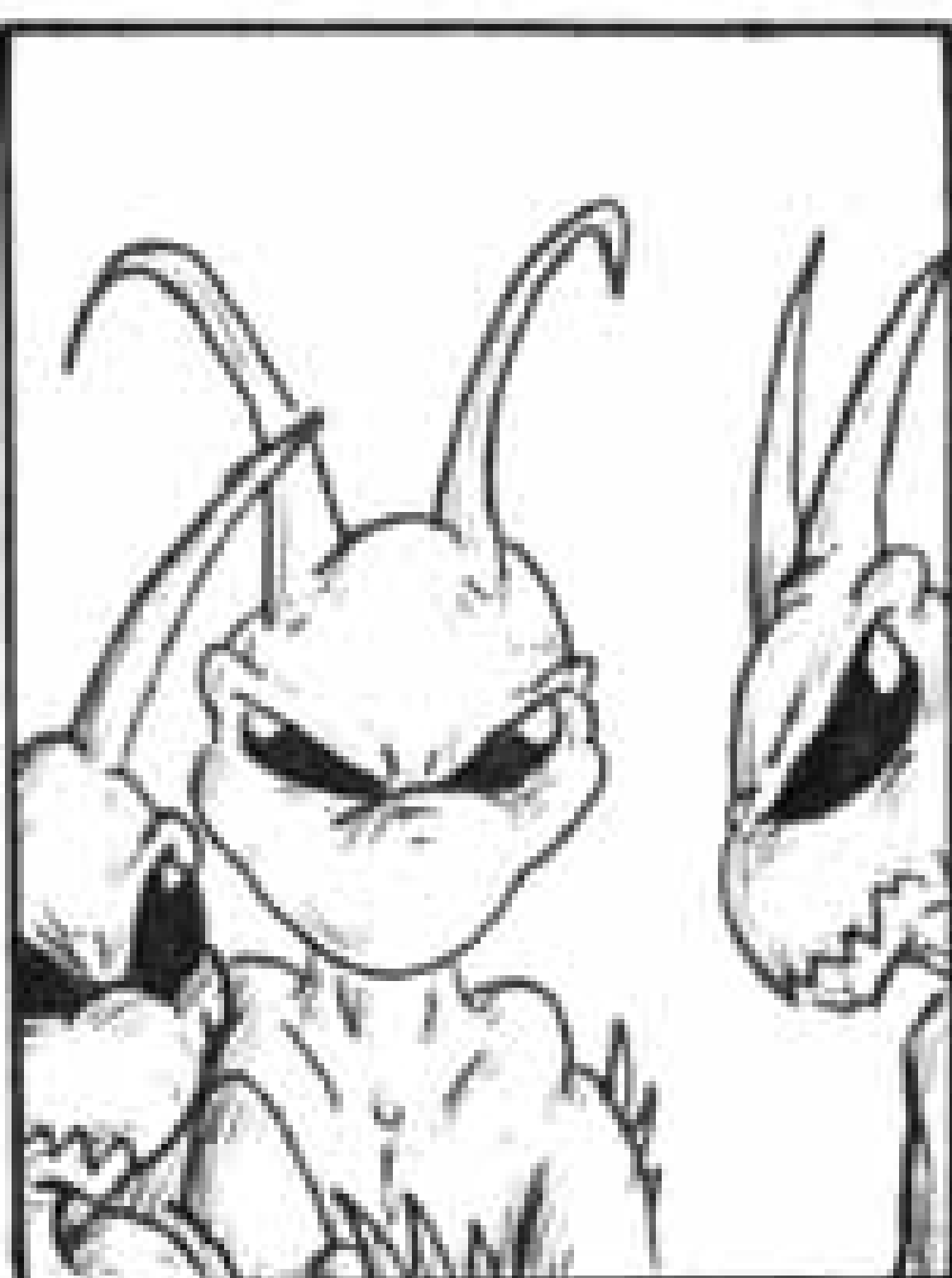


TED! GO!



NOW!!





CAPTAIN, ITS A DEAD END. WE'RE AT THE CLIFF WALL.

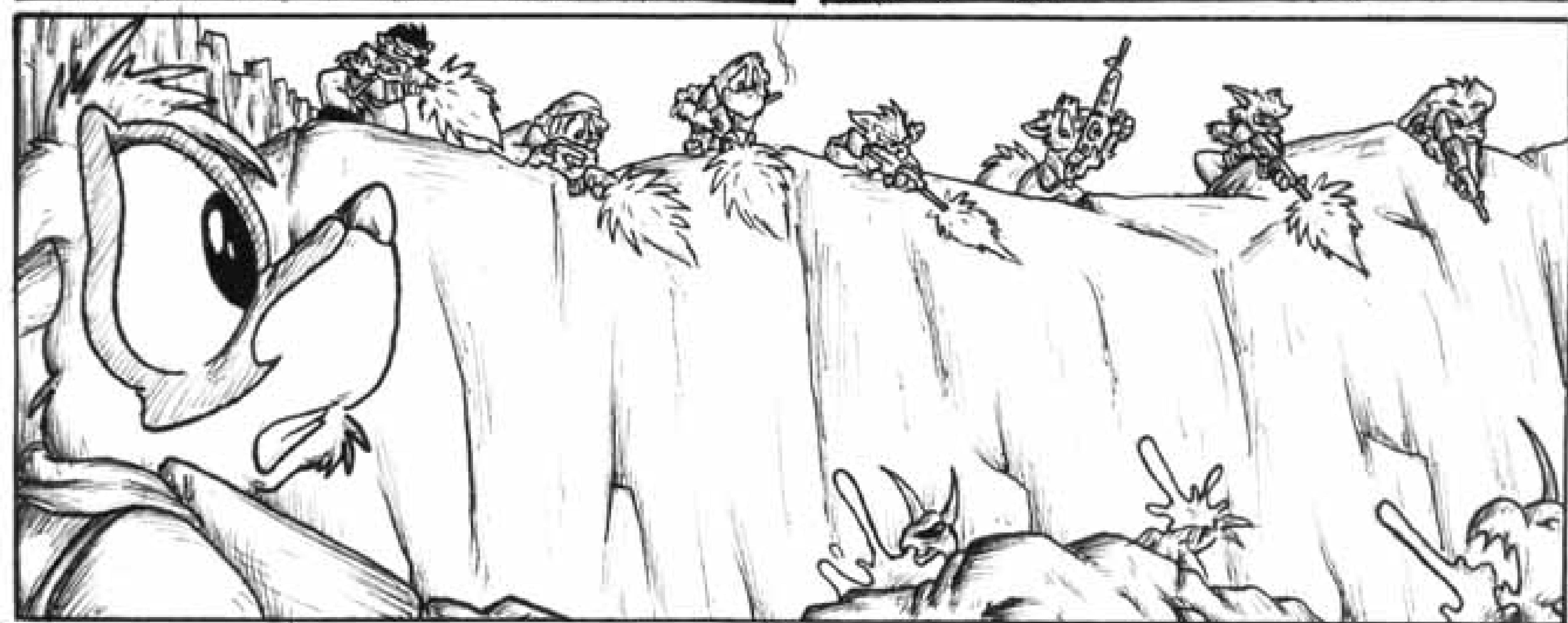
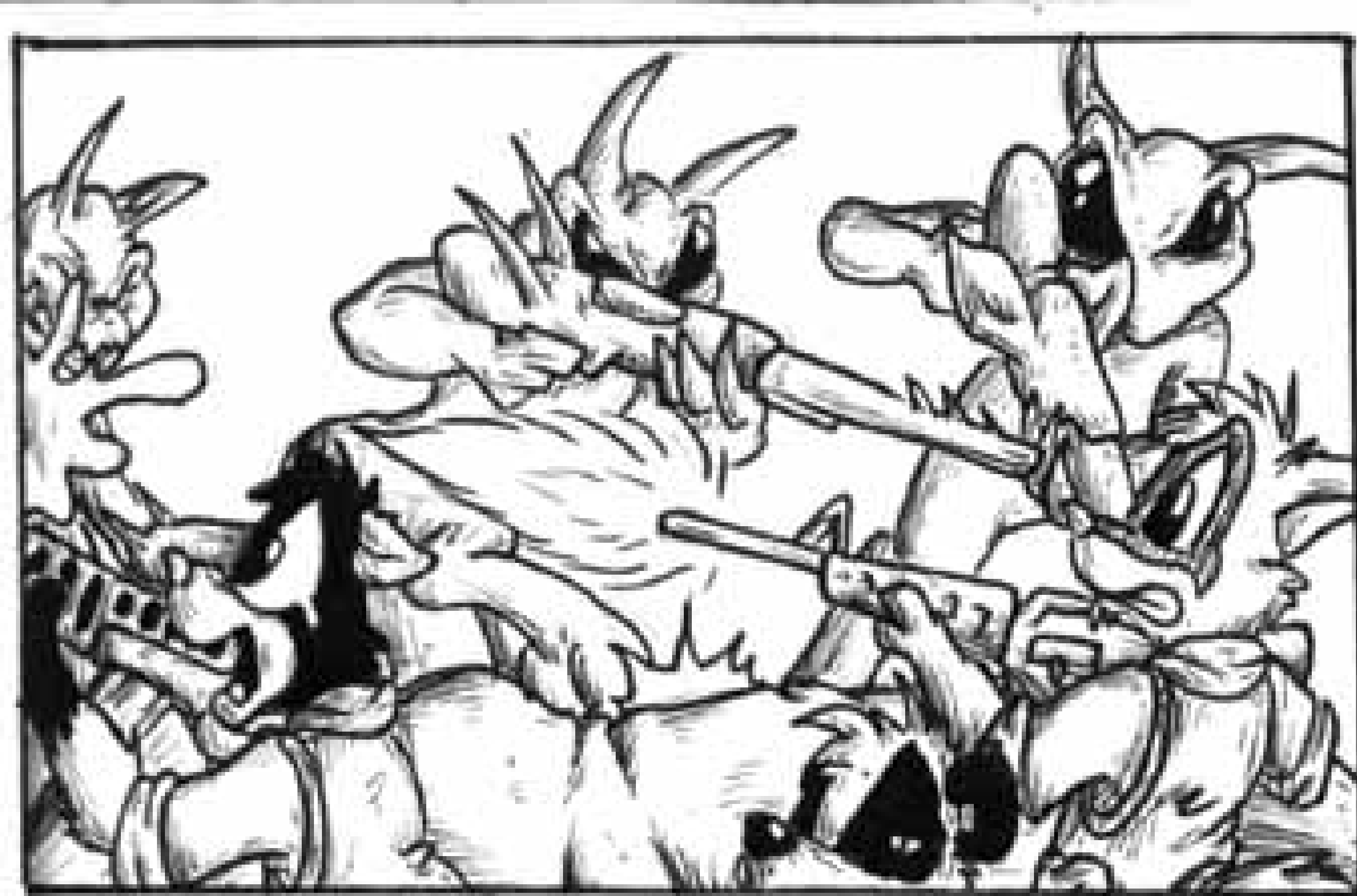


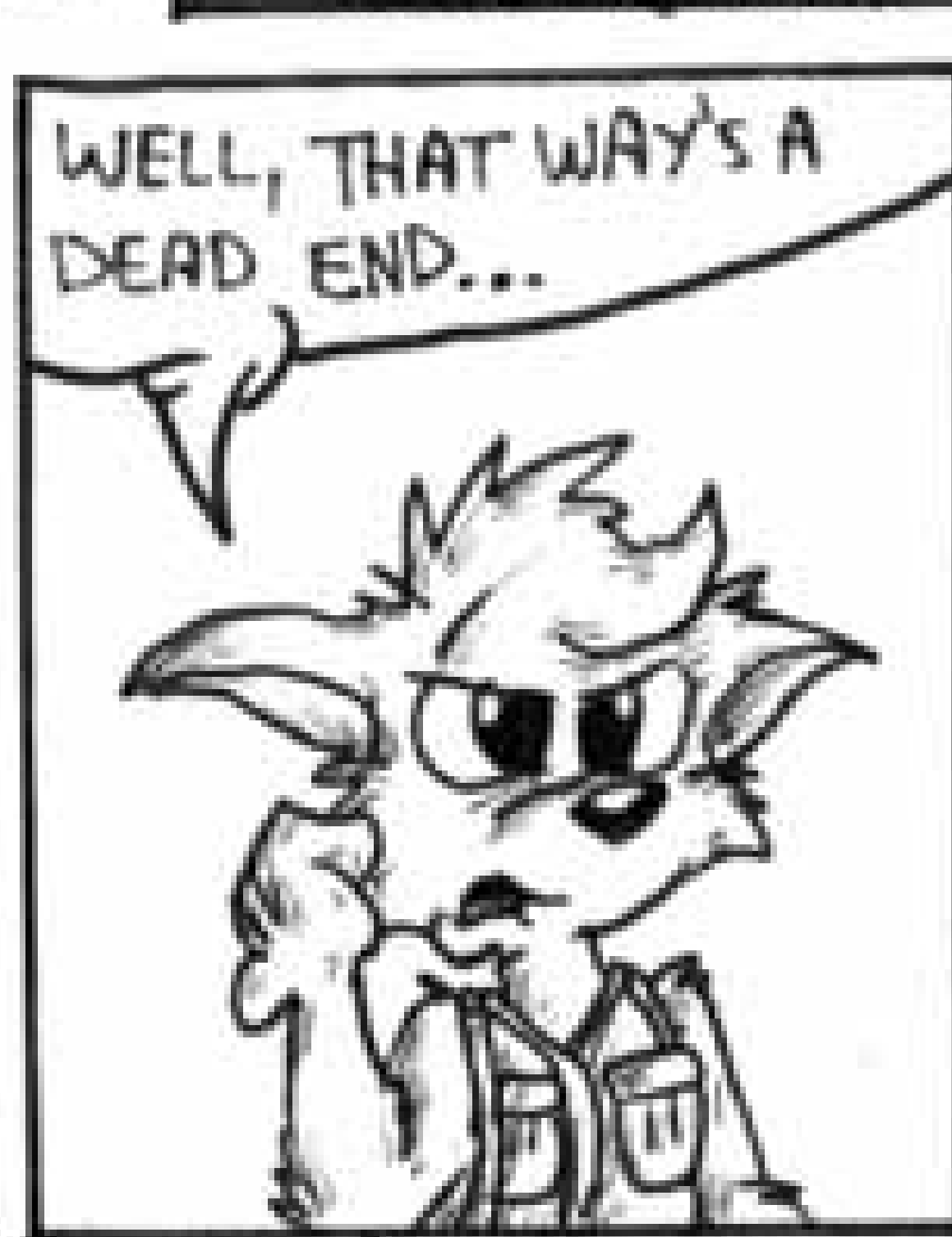
THIS IS THE MEETING POINT FOR THE OTHERS



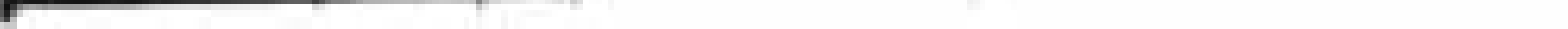
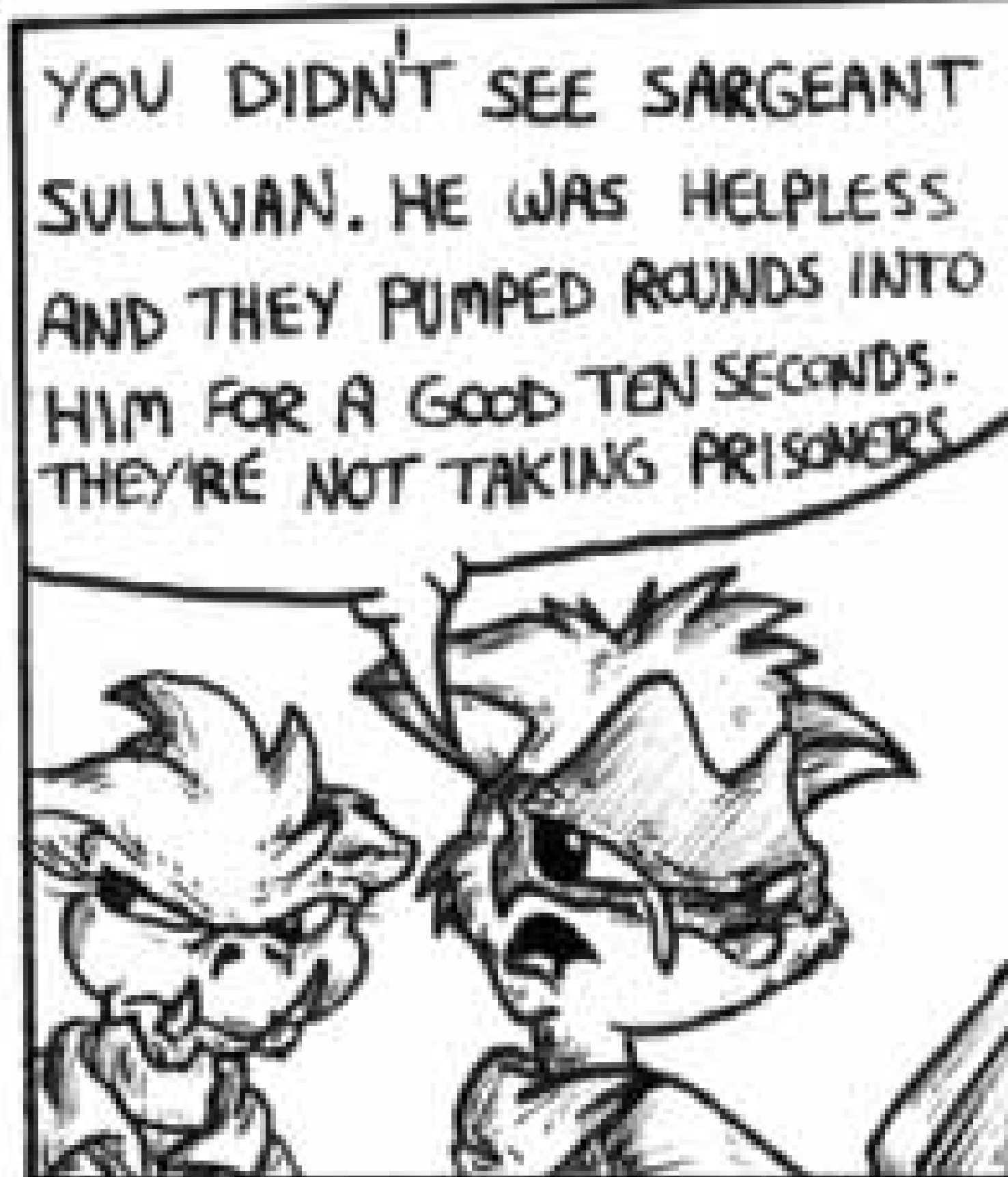
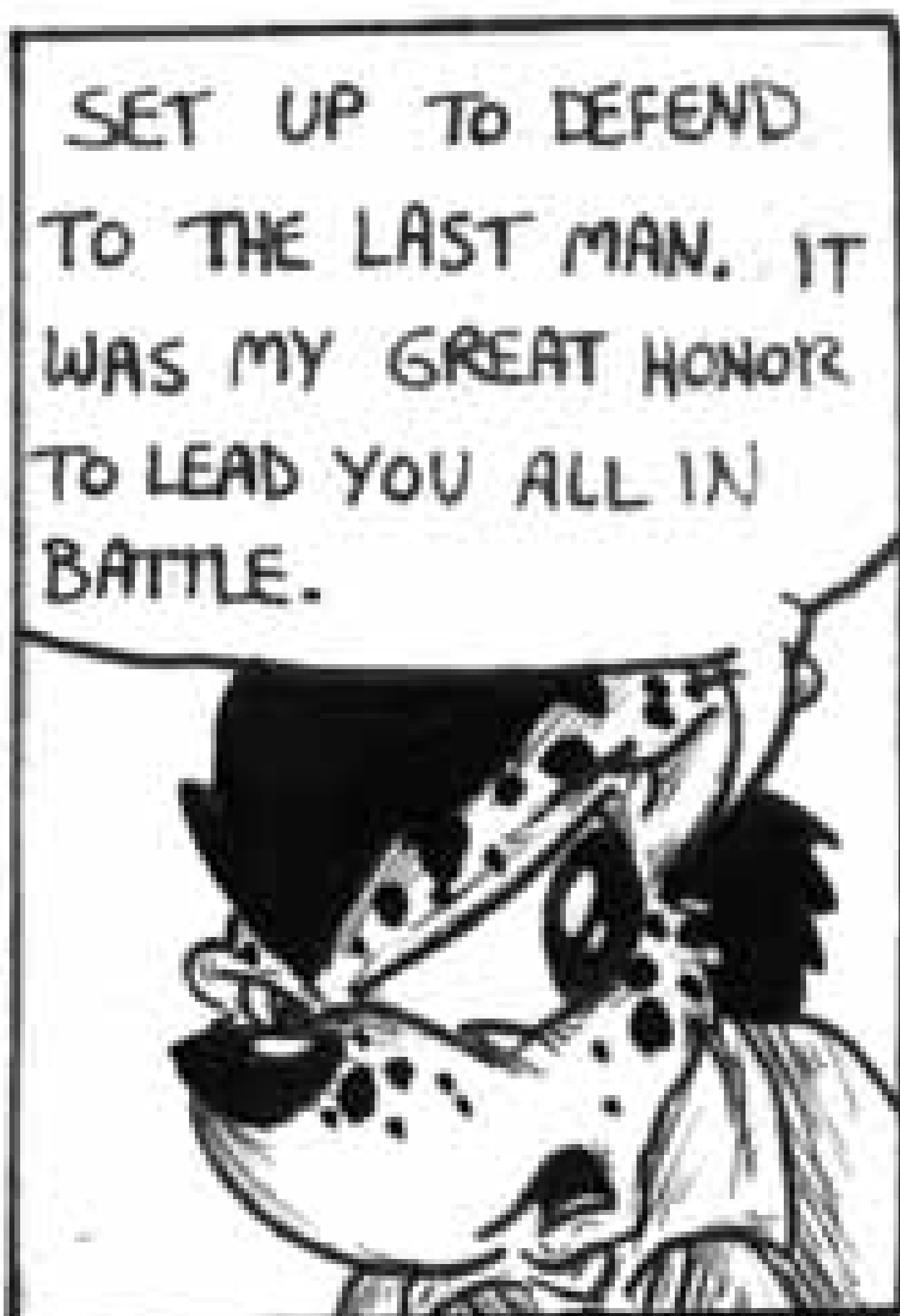
KEDGE!



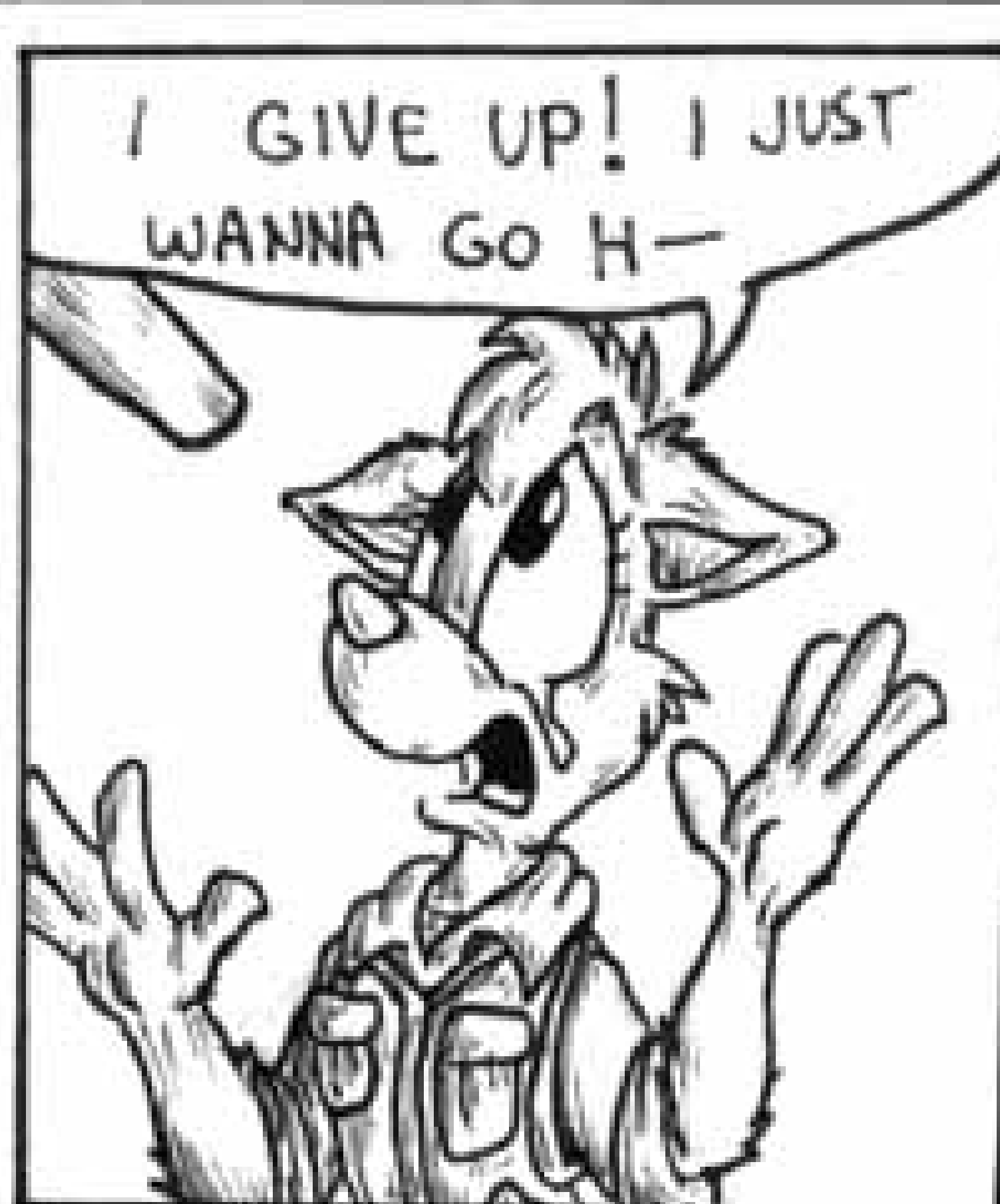












THEY'RE ALL DEAD. I--I'M
NEXT....



...DON'T MAKE IT EASY
ON'EM...



GET IN CLOSE. MAKES THEIR
GUNS WORTHLESS.



ARE YOU ALL RIGHT, SIR?



YEAH. I--



....



THAT'S A NICE SWEATER
YOU'RE WEARING... COME
WITH YOU? DOES THE
RABBIT HAVE TO TAG
ALONG TOO?



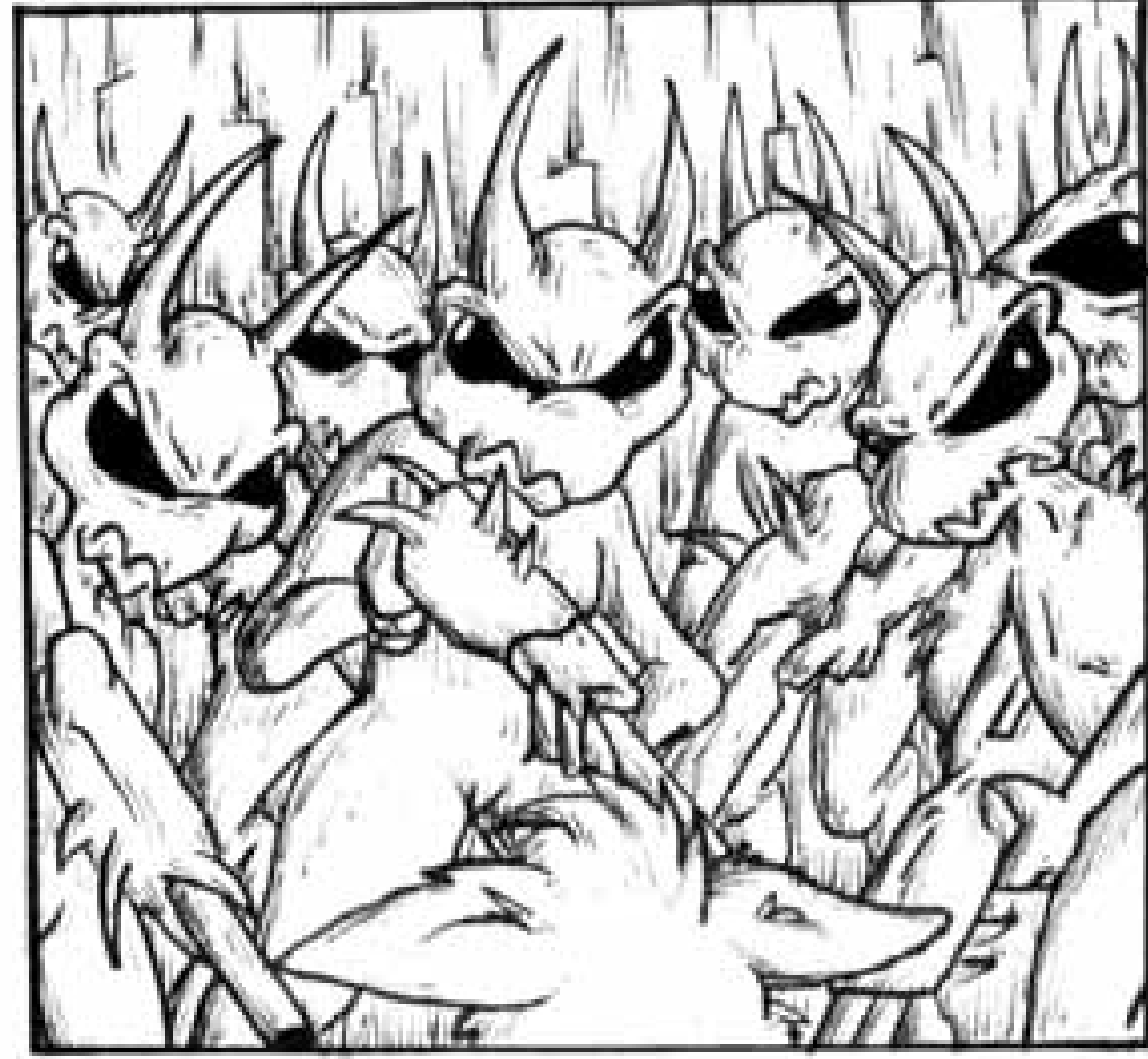
SIR?

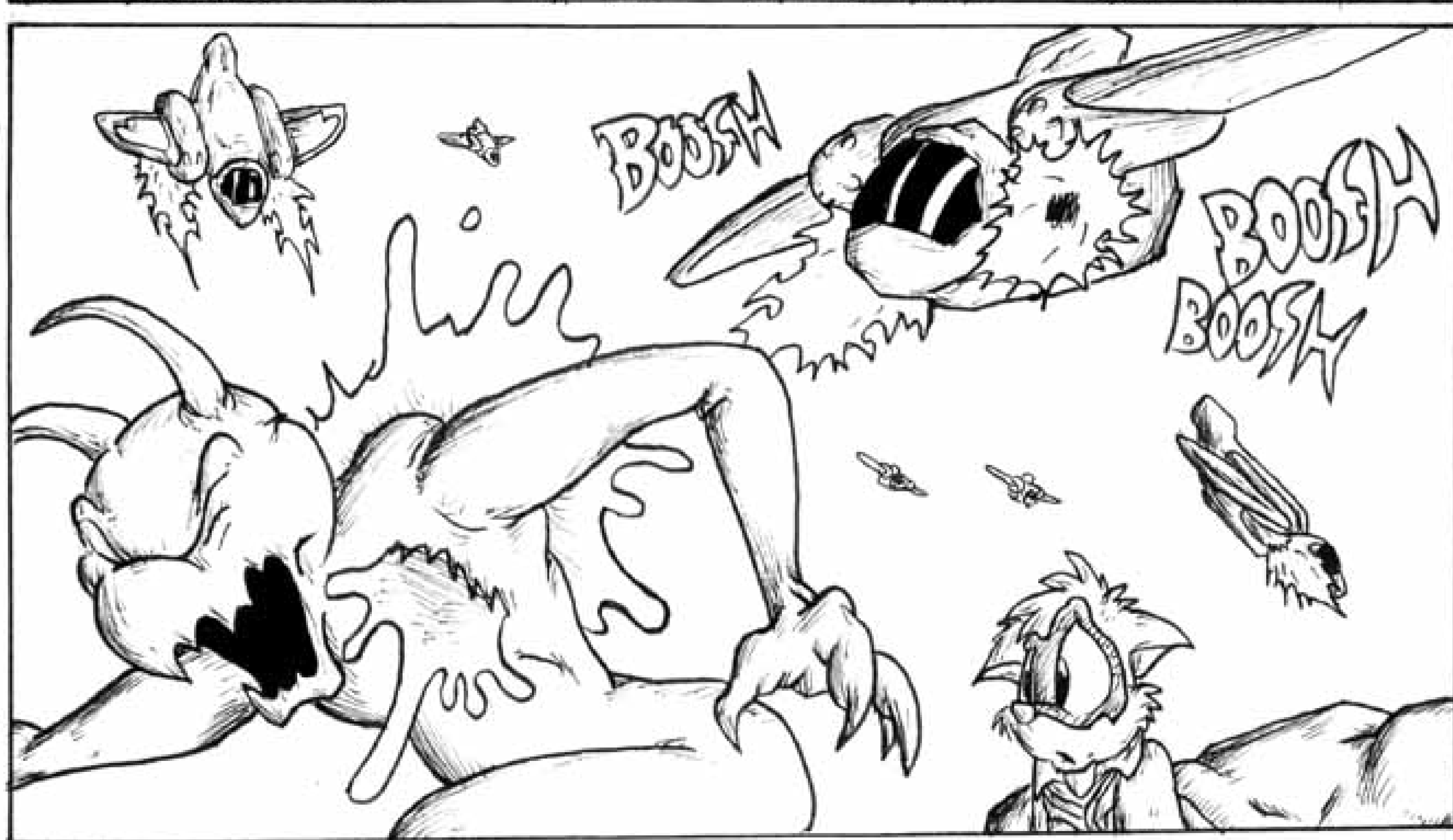
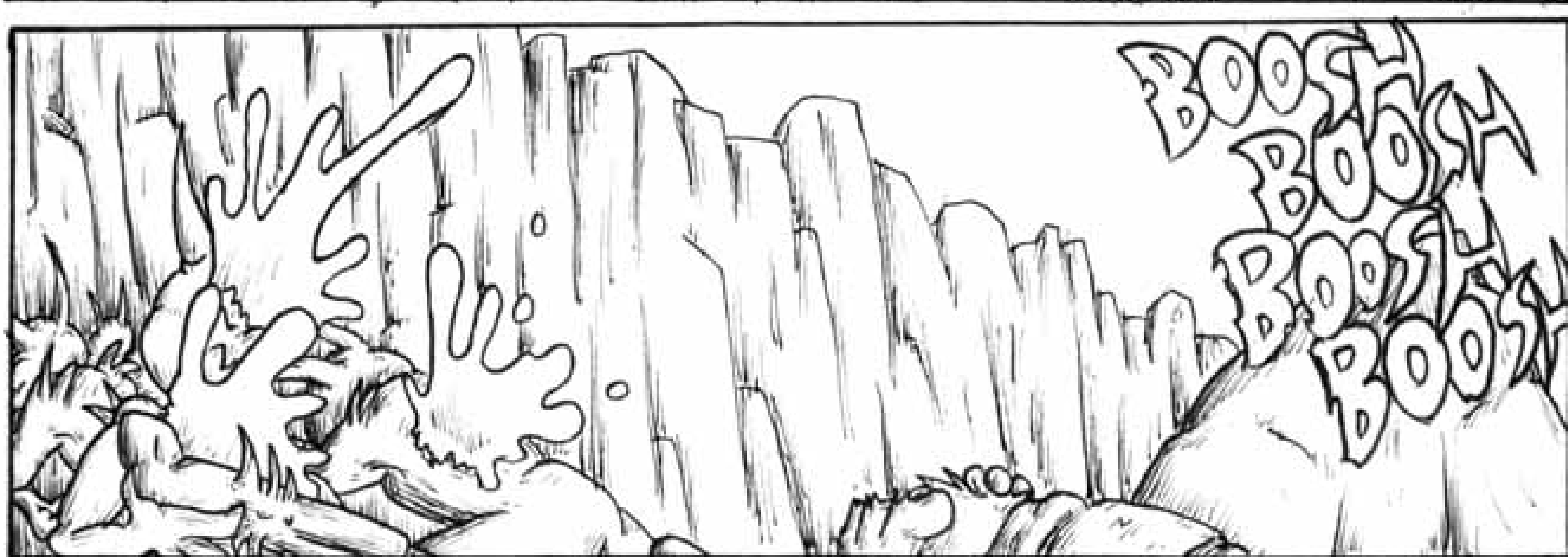


GRAAH!

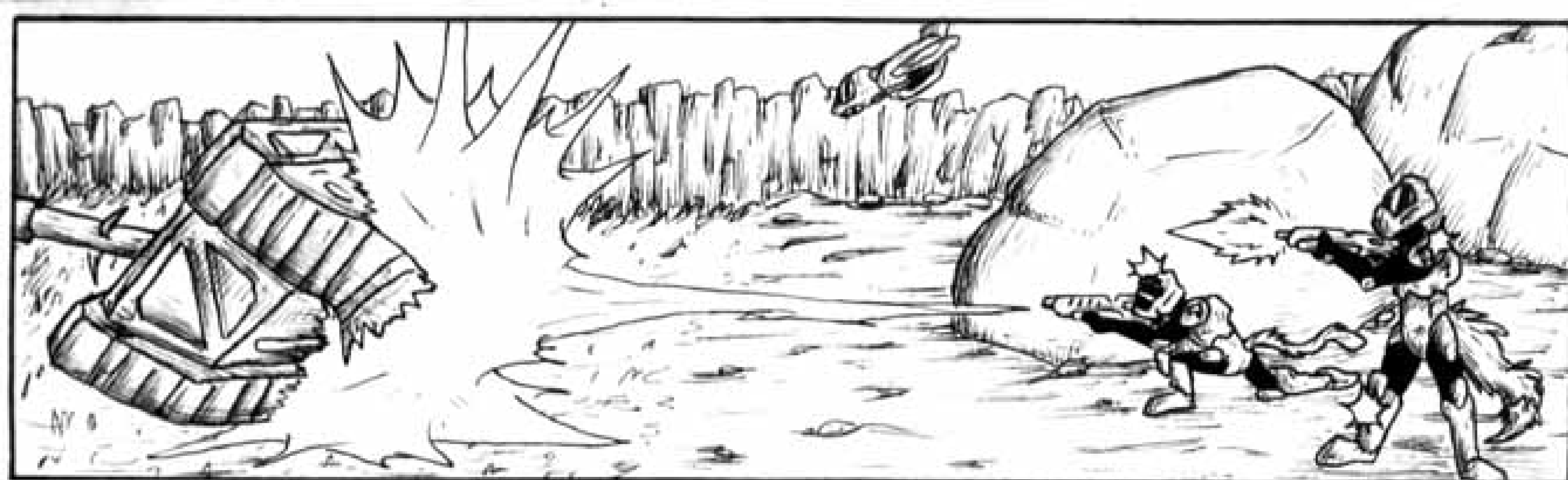












WE COULDN'T FIGURE OUT WHY THEY TURNED THEIR WHOLE FLEET AWAY FROM US...



THE BUGS THOUGHT THAT YOU WERE AN INVADING FORCE THAT HAD SNUCK PAST THEIR LINES. THEY SENT EVERYTHING THEY HAD AFTER YOU IN A PANIC.



YOU AND YOUR FRIENDS MET ONLY A SMALL FRACTION OF THE FORCE THEY SENT YOUR WAY.



WHEN THEY TURNED ON US, WE FOUGHT THEM ALL THE WAY DOWN HERE.



GRANTED, IT WAS A PRETTY ONE-SIDED FIGHT BUT WE STILL LOST SOME GOOD MEN... AND A FEW BAD ONES, COME TO THINK OF IT...



BUT IF THIS WAR ENDS ANY FASTER AS A RESULT, IT WAS ALL WORTH IT.

KEDGE!



I WAS SO SCARED. I HID WITH THE BODIES. I-- I THOUGHT I WAS GOING TO DIE.

ME TOO...

THERE'S A SHUTTLE COMING TO TAKE YOU TWO TO THE SHIP IN ORBIT. THE MEDICS WILL GIVE YOU A ONCE-OVER AND LET YOU GET CLEANED UP. PROBABLY DEBRIEF YOU. AFTER THAT, THEY'LL SEND YOU HOME FOR A BIT.



I CAN'T GO HOME YET, THOUGH.

MARINE?

I HAVE A DEBT TO REPAY.



TTFN
FOR:
RET CSM DONALD HOPKINS SR
Sgt. DJ "DEEG" HOPKINS
CAPT. KENITH "TALON" BAKER

WARR
WARR
11/29/05